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AH and MH offices close to help slow COVID surge

by SUE TIFFIN
Editor

Both Algonquin Highlands and Minden Hills townships responded on Monday to a late-Friday recommendation from the medical officer of health to help slow a surge in COVID-19 cases spiking in part due to the highly-transmissible Omicron variant.

On Dec. 17, the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District health unit sent a letter asking employers to move employees to work remotely, if they hadn't already been doing so and if they were able to do so.

"I am worried that we are already seeing a surge of cases in advance of the holiday season" said Dr. Natalie Bocking, medical officer of health for the local health unit. "Our goal is to reduce the number of people working in close proximity to help halt any further spread. Broad measures are required as there is no one sector that is causing this sharp increase in local cases."

Bocking recommended that all employers move employees to work remotely, limit on-site interactions including conducting meetings virtually, and continue with COVID-19 protocols for those on-site, including staggering lunch breaks and wearing tightly fitting masks. Algonquin Highlands council met at 9 a.m. on Monday morning, having prepared to meet prior to the letter being released to discuss

see MUNICIPALITIES page 3



Skating with Santa

Kids rushed to see Santa Claus when he stepped up to the rink on Dec. 17, part of a holiday celebration for the Minden Skating Club at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena. Later, kids had individual visits with Santa and received gift bags ahead of the Christmas holiday. See more photos on page 14. /NICK BERNARD Staff

New restrictions announced as COVID-19 cases rise

by NICK BERNARD
Times Staff

In an announcement on Dec. 17, the Ontario government announced new restrictions in the face of rising COVID-19 case counts, and the continuing spread of the Omicron variant.

"Throughout this entire pandemic, we've never faced an enemy like Omicron given how quickly it spreads," said Premier Doug Ford in a press release issued that afternoon. "We need to do everything we can to slow its spread as we continue to dramatically ramp up capacity to get as many booster shots into arms as possible. Doing so is the best way

to safeguard our hospital and intensive care units."

Effective as of Dec. 19 at midnight, a 50 per cent capacity limit is in place for a number of indoor settings:

- Restaurants, bars and other food or drink establishments and strip clubs;

see PROVINCE page 2

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**season's
greetings**

Colby Mintz, Lundyn Hutchinson and Micah Kegel carry bags of food from the ASES community to trucks that will deliver the donations to the Minden Community Food Centre. / Submitted photo



Three trucks full

Archie Stouffer Elementary School students required three trucks to deliver the enormous amount of food the school community collected this month in a food drive for Minden's food bank.

Last Friday, students and staff filled the truck beds with non-perishable food and per-

sonal hygiene products they had been collecting since Dec. 3 through their Giving from our Hearts to Fill the Cart campaign, delivering it to the Minden Community Food Centre that morning.

- Staff

Rob Parish helps ASES students load boxes filled with food that was collected during the school's annual festive food drive onto a truck for delivery to the downtown food bank.

Province reduces gathering limits, ramps up booster efforts

from page 1

- Personal care services;
- Personal physical fitness trainers;
- Retailers (including grocery stores and pharmacies);
- Shopping malls;
- Non-spectator areas of facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities (e.g.

gyms);

- Indoor recreational amenities;
- Indoor clubhouses at outdoor recreational amenities;
- Tour and guide services;
- Photography studios and services; and
- Marinas and boating clubs.

“The experts have been very clear: nothing

will stop the spread of Omicron,” Ford said. “It’s just too transmissible.”

No new decisions about school closures were announced, but Ford said he understood parents’ concerns.

“I know you’re concerned about your kids’ schools, and what to expect after the new year,” he said. “I can tell you this: No decision has been made on what that looks like yet.”

In an email to the *Times*, the TLDSB confirmed Ford’s statement:

“TLDSB follows the directives of the local and provincial health units and the Ministry of Education in relation to all COVID-19 restrictions; at this time we have not been advised by the medical officer of health or by the Minister of Education that schools will be required to close to in-person learning in January,” the school board said. “TLDSB is currently planning for students and staff to return to in-person learning on Jan. 3, 2022. Should provincial directives change over the holidays, we will communicate to staff and families as promptly as possible.”

Locally, the restrictions have affected organizations like the Highland Storm Minor Hockey Association. Their restrictions include a maximum of two spectators per player allowed in the arena, no spectators allowed in the indoor lobby area, and mandatory social distancing and mask use.

On their Facebook page, the Minden Curling Club announced a postponement of their curling season.

“We’re postponing our curling season immediately to help [curb] the spread of COVID-19,” the post said. “Stay safe over the holiday season and we will update you in the coming month about when we will be able to open again.”

At Sir Sam’s Ski and Ride, owner Doug Wilkinson says the facility is still working out how to interpret the 50 per cent capacity limit, given the different number of indoor spaces that encompasses Sir Sam’s. Its liquor licence covers a capacity of 650 both indoors and outdoors, while other indoor spaces have a capacity for up to 450.

Wilkinson also said that Sir Sam’s never returned to full capacity after an easing of restrictions in October.

“For the most part, we didn’t go back to full capacity,” Wilkinson said. “So hopefully it’s going to be a minor adjustment ... just

because, since we’re a ski hill, through the summer [we’re] not very busy, so we never went back to full capacity.”

He said hopefully, any changes the facility does make will be done comfortably and with minimal impact to its current operational status.

“Our understanding is – and we were on a call with the Ministry [of Health] last night – that there’s no impact to capacities outside on the hill,” Wilkinson said. “So there’s no issues on that front.”

In addition, to mitigate COVID-19 transmission that can occur at informal social gatherings, the province also announced it was reducing social gathering limits to 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors.

“This was not an easy decision to make before the holidays, but the evidence is clear that further public health measures are required to slow the spread of Omicron and prevent our hospitals from being overwhelmed,” said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. “As we expand booster eligibility and continue our Team Ontario effort to get as many shots into arms as possible, I am urging every single person to get their vaccine if they haven’t already done so, and sign up for their booster shot as soon as possible.”

In response to emerging global evidence of substantial increased transmissibility of the Omicron variant, the Chief Medical Officer of Health is updating the personal protective equipment requirements outlined in Directive 5 to provide interim guidance to require N95s for health care workers providing direct care to or interacting with a suspected, probable or confirmed case of COVID.

According to the provincial government’s Dec. 17 press release, the latest modelling suggests that the increased transmissibility of the Omicron variant could put additional strain on Ontario’s hospital capacity, making it critical to slow the spread as the government dramatically increases vaccine capacity and expands eligibility for third booster doses. The province recently doubled its vaccination capacity and continues to ramp up further to get as many vaccines into arms as possible. Over 156,000 doses were administered on Dec. 16 with capacity increased to 200,000 to 300,000 in the coming days.

- with files from the Minden Times

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High-tech can help prepare for high water

by STEPHEN PETRICK
Special to the Times

When the water rises, it can be dangerous and damaging to properties and homes, but gathering good data provides a great defence.

A presentation by watershed services co-ordinator Cory Harris and remote sensing specialist Ian Jeffrey of the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority to Haliburton County council on Dec. 15 showed how new technology is helping the conservation authority get a clearer understanding of flood plains throughout the county.

The new data that's been gathered will ensure municipal planners are better prepared for floods, as they'll have a deeper understanding of the shape of land and know what homes and properties are at risk and how the rising water will likely behave.

Recent applications for senior government funding has come through, allowing

for Ganaraska Conservation to embark on a LiDAR data acquisition project along the Gull and Burnt River systems.

LiDAR stands for light detection and ranging. LiDAR data can be gathered when an airplane with lasers flies over land and water. The lasers detect the contour of the Earth below and the data it collects generates colour-coded, seemingly 3D images, which give a sense of the height of buildings and vegetation relative to the land's surface.

"We have high quality LiDAR everywhere there's a flood line, so that flood line is well understood and defensible," Jeffrey said.

Ganaraska Conservation also received funding to gather bathymetric data for the Gull and Burnt River watersheds. This data is similar to LiDAR but is gathered through sonar technology and focuses just on water bodies. That technology is attached to a remote-controlled water vessel.

This data acquisition project is still ongoing,

but "so far it looks really good," Jeffrey said.

The data will be used to create models of the flood plains. Those models "will show how the river will leave its banks, which shows how that behaviour will play out over time and ultimately give you good data to put into your planning process."

Flooding episodes have happened along the Gull and Burnt River water systems in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019. As a result, a partnership was formed between Haliburton County, Ganaraska Conservation and the nearby Kawartha Conservation to gather stronger data.

The study area for these data gathering projects covered 2,800 square kilometres of drainage area, including 23 lakes and 42 dams.

But the work isn't over. The hydraulic models that the data creates will go through a peer review process in 2022, Harris said. Dams and structures in the project area are also subject to ongoing surveying. As the conservation

authority now has precise information on how water can rise, it can maintain them properly.

Minden Hills Mayor Brent Devolin shared that his home was threatened by intense flooding in 2013. That event started a movement to gather new information and the current projects are the end of an important "nine-year journey," he said. "Certainly, the expertise that your group brings to this piece cannot be understated. It's exciting to see this get to this point."

Haliburton County director of planning Steven Stone said when the projects are fully complete, he expects information on the flood plain to be released to the public. The data will also likely influence future policy and planning, as the county will know where it's not safe to build.

"It will drive community development in the future," he said.

Municipalities well-versed in putting pandemic measures in place

from page 1

possibly restricting access to township buildings. Council agreed that staff that could work from home, should work from home, and that township buildings should be accessed by those with appointments only, and closed to general public access.

"As for the measures to restrict people coming into the office, I think that's absolutely the way to go, myself," said Councillor Jennifer Dailloux. "Society is more than familiar with these sorts of measures now, has come to expect it. This is a variant that seems to pass all sorts of barriers that others weren't passing before, and I think it's in the best interest of our staff, certainly to just revert back to what society is used to until the next step, whatever that might be."

"I agree with you," said Mayor Carol Moffatt. "There are not hundreds of people going to the township office every day. We went to extreme lengths to successfully move so much of our business online where possible, I think as you note, we can shift back. I

think we've built that resilience into that entire discussion."

Deputy Mayor Liz Daniels, who is also county warden, said the county's emergency control group had discussed people working from home if that is possible, with those leaving for holiday vacation taking their equipment and work supplies with them. They had not, however, agreed to make another emergency declaration – the last state of emergency being declared over in August.

"We're going to continue to revisit that as more information comes out, because I've got a feeling this is going to move quickly," said Daniels. Councillors noted the emergency control group can meet quickly, within an hour, whereas council must give 24 hours public notice minimum, before meeting.

While councillors said they were prepared for employees to work from home and buildings to be closed this time, having been through a surge in cases requiring restrictions on movement during the pandemic before, Daniels expressed her frustration with lack of further guidance from the provincial

government.

"It's unfortunate that the province does not come out with more clear direction, they've put it in the hands of each of the health units so we're going to have different situations in every different health unit area," she said. "It just makes it confusing for people."

Council agreed to letting staff move to work-from-home when they were ready and comfortable to do so this week, and said township offices should be moved to appointment only immediately, as provincial restrictions regarding capacity went into effect on Dec. 19.

Council agreed to implement measures as had been done in the past, scheduling meetings with township staff by appointment with preferred contact by email or telephone.

"This should just put it in place unless anything changes and we'll have to just wait and see what happens there, because as we know it's a continually shifting landscape," said Moffatt.

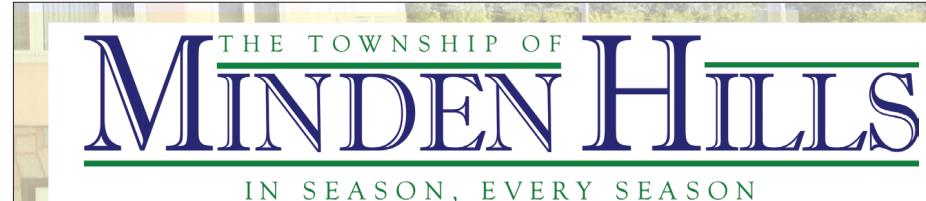
Later on Monday afternoon at 3:30 p.m., Minden Hills township distributed a press re-

lease noting service reductions based on the same recommendation by Bocking and the HKPRD health unit.

"Township facilities are closed to the public, until further notice," read the press release. "The township's first priority is for the protection of the public and staff."

As a result of the closures, scheduled in-person meetings with staff from all municipal departments are available on an as-needed basis and by appointment only and building inspections will occur on a case-by-case basis. The Agnes Jamieson Gallery and Minden Hills Cultural Centre and the gymnasium and walking track at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena and community centre are closed.

Landfills remain open with regular levels of service being provided at this time and building and planning applications will continue to be processed. The arena ice pad remains available for booking. Public skating and ice programs are limited to a maximum of 25 participants.



(VIRTUAL) COUNCIL MEETINGS
Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted virtually via web conference meetings, until further notice. Meetings begin at 9:00 AM unless otherwise noted. The schedule of upcoming meetings are:

January 13 – Regular Council Meeting
January 27 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by joining a live-stream link available on the township website at www.mindenhills.ca/council/ or by using the direct link provided in the notice. Meeting agendas are not displayed during the meeting, please download by visiting our website at www.mindenhills.ca/council/.

Please note the live-stream link provided for each meeting will only be activated while Council is in session.

HOLIDAY HOURS AT WASTE SITES

All Minden Hills Waste Sites are closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day so our staff can enjoy time with their families. Happy Holidays!

LOW WASTE HOLIDAY SEASON

Have you heard of re-gift-mas? If you received something for Christmas that isn't quite to your taste, consider giving it to a neighbor, taking it to work to see if a co-worker would like it or posting it for free in an online classified. One person's trash is another's treasure!

PUBLIC WORKS EQUIPMENT OPERATORS NEEDED

We are currently accepting resumes for permanent and temporary full time Equipment Operators for the Public Works Department.

Many of our positions include benefits such as enrollment in a comprehensive benefit package, Employee Assistance Plan, life insurance, personal health coverage, OMERS pension plan, vacation, float and sick time entitlements as well as opportunities for training and development.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Avoiding Frostbite and Hypothermia

Cold weather can be dangerous for anyone who spends time outdoors for either work or pleasure. Be mindful of the risks. Excessive exposure to low temperatures, wind or moisture can cause two dangerous conditions: frostbite and hypothermia.

WINTER SPEED

During a snow storm, posted speed limits are usually too fast. Conditions can also be unpredictable and change rapidly. Adjust your speed accordingly and give yourself extra travel time.

Seasons Greetings

From the Township of Minden Hills Council and Staff would like to wish everyone in Minden Hills a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

MUNICIPAL HOLIDAY HOURS

Administration Office

Dec 20th to Dec 23rd

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

CLOSED Dec 24th at

11:30 a.m. to Jan 4th

Cultural Centre/ Agnes Jamieson Gallery

CLOSED Dec 20th to Jan 4th

Landfills

All Sites are **CLOSED**

Dec 25th & Jan 1st

Community Services Department

Administration Office

Dec 20th to Dec 23rd

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

CLOSED Dec 24th at

11:30 a.m. to Jan 4th

11:30 a.m. to Dec 26th

Dec 27th to Dec 30th

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

CLOSED Dec 31st at

11:30 a.m. to Jan 2nd

Public Works Department

Administration Office

Dec 20th to December 23rd

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 a.m.

CLOSED Dec 24th at

11:30 a.m. to Jan 4th

Fire Department

Administration Office

Dec 20th to December 23rd

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

CLOSED Dec 24th at

11:30 a.m. to Jan 4th

Regular hours resume Jan 4, 2022

Health unit's goal is to interrupt and slow transmission of COVID-19

by SUE TIFFIN
Editor

The following are brief reports from a Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge (HKPR) district health unit press conference with medical officer of health Dr. Natalie Bocking, held virtually Dec. 15 and press releases issued Dec. 15 and Dec. 17.

After the provincial government announced new restrictions to capacity limits on Dec. 17, that afternoon the health unit sent a letter to employers encouraging them to put measures in place to help prevent further spread of COVID-19. The province was reporting an increasing surge in confirmed cases of the virus due to the Omicron variant, that number topping 4,000 on Dec. 19. In the past two weeks, 126 cases have been confirmed within the HKPR region.

"I am worried that we are already seeing a surge of cases in advance of the holiday season," said Bocking in the press release. "Our goal is to reduce the number of people working in close proximity to help halt any further spread. Broad measures are required as there is no one sector that is causing this sharp increase in local cases."

In her letter to employers, Bocking recommends that all employers move all employees to work remotely, unless their work requires them to be on-site at the workplace and limit all on-site interactions, including conducting meetings virtually when feasible to do so. Staff required to work on-site should be actively screened for symptoms of COVID-19, be physically distanced by at least two metres when at workstations, wear tightly fitting masks when moving throughout the workplace, stagger lunches and breaks to maximize distance and minimize interactions and ensure that lunchrooms and break areas are arranged and posted with a maximum occupancy to maintain physical distance between employees.

"While these measures will not stop an upcoming Omicron surge, the goal is to interrupt and slow down transmission of the virus as much as possible," Dr. Bocking said. "We need to work together to prevent severe illness from COVID and protect our health care system from further strain."

Potential case of Omicron variant

On Dec. 15, the health unit announced they had been notified that initial screening of a local resident who has COVID-19 has shown the person has the markers consistent with the Omicron variant.

Although Omicron has not yet been confirmed in this individual, Bocking said this screening means it is "highly likely" that this is an Omicron variant infection. The individual lives in Northumberland County, making this the first potential case of Omicron identified in a resident of the health unit's region.



Hockey team outbreaks

"Across multiple health unit jurisdictions, over the last couple of weeks, we have had a number of outbreaks identified among hockey teams, mostly associated with hockey tournaments," Bocking said. "There does not seem to be transmission as much on the ice as much as there is in hotels or other settings where teams might interact with other teams, or you have parents/guardians of players that are interacting with each other, but we have seen multiple tournaments associated with increased COVID case numbers. And so I think as we look at the next couple of weeks and we look at the introduction of the Omicron variant, we are highly encouraging [everyone] to be quite cautious in their interactions and re-evaluating current restrictions related to activities."

By the numbers

As of the Dec. 15 briefing, 2,686 cases of COVID-19 had been reported in the HKPR region since the pandemic began. At the time of the briefing there were 59 active cases – two in Haliburton County, 36 in City of Kawartha Lakes and 21 in Northumberland County – and 135 high-risk contacts.

The incidence rate was 36.2 per 100,000 people – three weeks ago, that was five cases per 100,000, and Bocking noted that in Kingston where there has been exponential growth and a nation-high surge, the incidence rate was 350 cases per 100,000.

"In summary, if I had to describe really what we're seeing in terms of cases locally, we are seeing a steady increase now associated with both a higher number of outbreaks, but also a higher number of cases in total, including broader community transmission of COVID-19," Bocking said.

In the 14 days prior to the briefing, 115 cases or 23 per cent were identified in those aged zero to nine, and 16 per cent were identified in those aged 40 to 49.

Of the cases identified in the past two weeks, 30 per cent were household contacts, 18 per cent were close contacts and

18 per cent had no known source.

Pediatric vaccination slowing down

In the past two weeks, 85 per cent of those aged 12 and older in the region have received two doses of vaccine, and 87.3 per cent had received one dose, while among the age five to 11 group, 24.3 per cent have received their first dose.

"When COVID-19 eligibility first opened up for five to 11 year-olds, we did see very good uptake, appointments filled quickly and clinics were full," Bocking said. "After about the first two weeks that has calmed significantly and we see much slower uptake among this age group, or among the parents or guardians that are signing them up to be vaccinated. This isn't surprising, we know that parents and guardians are extra cautious in terms of children. This is the pattern, kind of historically when other new vaccinations are introduced for this age group. We do know that there continues to be close attention paid to the safety of the vaccine and effectiveness in this age group and it continues to demonstrate a good safety profile, and it's certainly - as indicated by the general numbers we see - important to continue to offer vaccines for this age group."

Booster eligibility opened up for those 18 and older as of Dec. 20, and Bocking said an additional 4,000 appointments would be opening this week, with potentially additional clinics added.

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County	Current Cases Not Resolved	Current High Risk Contacts	Current Probable Cases	Confirmed Cases (Total to date)	Confirmed Cases Resolved (Total to Date)	Hospitalizations (Total to date)	Confirmed Deaths (Total to date)	Probable Deaths (Total to date)
Haliburton	4	2	0	167	162	4	1	0
Kawartha Lakes	51	65	2	1,454	1,358	57	45	13
Northumberland	46	40	0	1,152	1,089	42	17	0
Total***	101	123	2	2,773	2,609	103	63	13

Haliburton County's COVID-19 case count remains low

In a report from the health unit on Dec. 20, no new confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Haliburton County, while 21 new cases were reported in City of Kawartha Lakes and 35 new cases were reported in Northumberland County. /Screenshot from the HKPRD website



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Schools still planning to return in-person following break

by NICK BERNARD
Times Staff

Trillium Lakelands District School Board director of education Wes Hahn gave his last COVID-19 update for 2021 ahead of the winter break at the final meeting on Dec. 14. He reported that, while they were seeing a decline in cases in Muskoka and Haliburton, numbers were increasing in Kawartha Lakes, and that the board would continue to monitor the situation.

Regarding cases in the schools, Hahn reported no active cases at the secondary school level. He also reported that all previously reported outbreaks have since been resolved. Hahn said that vaccinating those aged five to 11 will help to keep the case counts as low as they are now, despite an increase in cases in some communities.

"We know that the vaccination of the five- to 11-year-olds are a big part of this," Hahn said. "If the secondary schools are a reflection of what can happen with the vaccination rates and all the other things, then we're hoping that will happen with our five- to 11-year-olds."

Hahn said students were sent home with rapid antigen testing kits at the start of the winter break.

"Each student will get a kit that they will be using ... over the course of the holidays to test to ensure that they're ... not carrying the COVID virus," Hahn said.

The test, Hahn specified, is for students only, and that kits for staff are not yet available. He said that the board will be monitoring that particular dimension of the situation and promised to provide an update in the future.

Hahn also wanted to reassure parents and staff that, should the plan to return to school change over the holiday break,

schools were well-prepared to allow staff and students to return to the building to collect their belongings.

In an email to the *Times*, TLDSB communications officer Sinead Fegan confirmed that schools were still planning to return in-person following the break, and that parents would be notified of any changes.

"TLDSB follows the directives of the local and provincial health units and the Ministry of Education in relation to all COVID-19 restrictions; at this time we have not been advised by the Medical Officer of Health or by the Minister of Education that schools will be required to close to in-person learning in January," said Fegan. "Should provincial directives change over the holidays, we will communicate to staff and families as promptly as possible. We will also provide opportunities for students and staff to collect items from their schools should we move to online learning in the new year."

Secondary school students, staff consulted on return to semester

Following an announcement in November from Minister of Education Stephen Lecce, schools in the province were given permission to return to the pre-pandemic semester system.

In a report to the board, TLDSB superintendent Kim Williams said that Trillium Lakelands put a pause on proceeding with that return until the second school term, saying that principals across the board would take "a measured approach to the decision making in order to determine what was in the best interest of our students."

"Principals engaged in a wide range of conversations with students about semesters versus quadmesters," Williams

said. "We opted for conversations with students, instead of a survey, to allow principals to more fully engage students in a discussion about the pros and the cons of both systems."

Williams said the objective was to achieve a deeper understanding of the impact of both systems on student learning. She said staff were consulted in the same manner.

"While many students enjoyed quadmesters, many others preferred the semestered system, where they could spend more time learning the key concepts to help with their retention of material for future use," she said.

The benefit of having more time to learn and retain information was also echoed by teachers and principals.

"Additionally, moving to semesters provides a common lunch hour, which will better facilitate the ability for schools to offer support for students at lunch, and to continue with extra-curricular activities," Williams said.

Ultimately, Williams said, it was decided that a return to a semester schedule was best for student learning.

"Given this advice, and the fact that there are no current cases [of COVID] in our high schools, we've made the decision to return to a semestered system in February," Williams concluded.

Jersey Day raises funds for board-wide wellness initiative

At the outset of his director's report, Wes Hahn reported that November's board-wide Jersey Day fundraiser to benefit the Feed all Four Fund raised a grand total of \$8,454.

The next TLDSB meeting will be the Committee of the Whole meeting on Jan. 11 at the Muskoka Education Centre.

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please email Debbie@haliburtonpress.com or call (705) 286-1288.

Christmas memories

RECENTLY, MY mom was asked by her youngest grandchild to share a story from her life as part of a school assignment connecting children with their family history.

My mom has had a long, love-filled life to date, and you'd think she might need some time sifting through some of the memories that have been made in those years to consider which story to tell, but she didn't hesitate in recalling in great detail a memory from more than 60 years ago.

When she was about 11 years old, her family had finished opening their Christmas gifts – usually something to wear, something they wanted, and a gift from Santa under the tree. Her dad – who was filled with an abundance of Christmas spirit that he passed on to my mom, who we know has definitely passed it on to her youngest joy-filled and likely part-elf grandchild – had built and painted an elaborate cardboard fireplace as part of a festive living room decoration. After presents were opened on Christmas morning, he said, "I guess we can take this down now," before lifting up the box. Underneath was a brand new TV, one that my mom explained was a luxury item and much better than the one they had, that older TV broadcasting a picture filled with snow and requiring tube repairs from a repairman ... concepts she also had to explain further to a child living in a world in which they can watch clear videos on demand even in the middle of the forest on a phone that fits in a pocket.

One story led to another, and my mom then described how her dad would decorate the front of her childhood home – it started with lights and became more fantastic over the years to include recycled stovepipes he painted to look like candy canes, and plywood cut-outs he painted to look like snowmen. People would

come from all over town (which is what Scarborough was at that time, really) to see the display, in a time before jokes about Clark Griswold and generous front lawn decorations became more commonplace.

So many of my mom's memories of Christmas don't focus so much on what material good was received, but the feelings brought forward by the season -- her dad's excitement, the surprise of the fireplace reveal, the kindness of a delivery person who made it through a snowstorm to get a gift to her house very late on Christmas Eve, the joy the neighbours felt with the care put into a decorated lawn.

While Christmas can be a difficult time, especially amid a pandemic, we can still find ways to make and share happiness and joy with each other,

seeking out those who need it most and acting in kindness when we see it missing to make someone's days better. After these past two years, we have been reminded of how important it is to value each other and our time here together, to make it special and to create memories that keep us going through hard times. My mom's dad knew

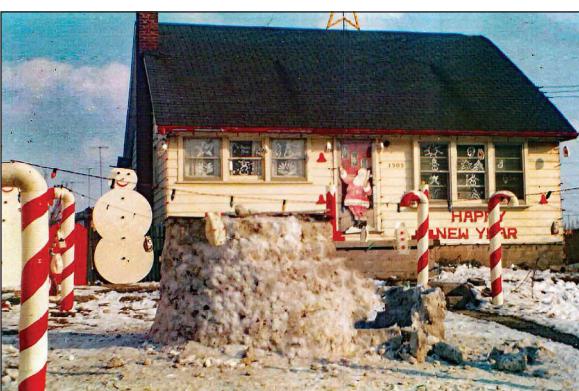
that, and so does my mom and now so does her youngest grandchild.

Whatever you do this holiday season, in whatever way you celebrate, however you find a safe way to be together, we hope it's a memorable one.

Merry Christmas, *Times* readers. We'll see you again right here in a new year.



SUE TIFFIN
Editor



Kwarky



Kim Wark

"We really want to travel. Anywhere."

'Twas the hunt before Christmas

TWAS THE hunt before Christmas

And all through the marsh,
not a mallard was flying,
the cold it was harsh.
When up through the clouds there appeared
a great flight.

A sled and some reindeer,
we had no tag in sight.
And down from the sleigh the old guy did
cry,
"There's three coming in from the dark,
dreary sky."

So we reached for our shotguns and I put
down my call,

and we tried to aim true so at
least one duck would fall.
Six shots were sent forth
though each far behind.
The mallards flew by,
Santa yelled, "Are you
blind?"

But the ducks circled back
like a gift that keeps giving,
so we shot once again, and
still all three were living.
Old Saint Nick he laughed
hard, and the ducks they kept
flying

I cried "I never shot" but he knew I was
lying.

"Come Dasher! Come Donner! Come
Blitzen and Dancer!"

And he watched once again as I missed a
merganser.

He circled once more and before he was
gone,
six geese flew by low but our safeties were
on.

And he heckled too hard like he never had
missed,

I was thinking of filing a cease and desist.
When down by the bay there was quite a
commotion,
a few hundred bluebills were all set in
motion.

"I'll give you this gift," yelled the Red-Coated Elf,

"I cannot miss these," I thought to myself,
But miss them I did, though I tried as I
might,
I missed on the left and I missed on the
right.

I missed in the middle, I missed on the
flanks,
I was starting to think that my shells were
all blanks.

And then from the sky fell a lonesome hen
scaup,
we were all so amazed as we watched the
thing drop.

It hit with a splash that made
the dog merry.

"I got that darn bird," said my
partner named Larry.

"He did get it Steve," yelled
the man in the sleigh,
"It looks like you're going
home skunked on this day."

And then I looked up as a
black duck flew near,
this most cautious of birds
thought there was nothing to
fear.

So I raised my gun quickly and I closed
both my eyes,
I thought I couldn't do worse than all my
past tries.

I yanked on the trigger and I heard a great
splash,
and the retriever with us brought it back in
a flash.

And there was a black duck, a majestic old
breed,
And attached to its leg was a note that did
read,

"To my dear Steve, here's a duck for your
plate,
your shooting today was frankly not great.
So, under your tree is a case full of skeet,
practice on them,
Till the next time we meet."



STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

IN OTHER WORDS

Columns and Letters to the Editor

O Night Divine!

(This column is a story I have written and told many times. I'm repeating it because for me Christmas without it would not be Christmas.)

FRESH FALLEN snow protested beneath the crush of my gumboots breaking trail down the unplowed lane. Dry, sharp squeaks, not unlike the cries of cheap chalk cruelly scraped against too clean a blackboard.

Skuur-eek, skuur-eek.

The boots ignored the sounds. They moved on, ribbed rubber bottoms and laced high leather tops creating a meandering wake in the ankle-deep snow. To each side of the trail, drifted snow leaned tiredly against the backsides of the bungalows, dropped there to rest by an impatient Christmas Eve blizzard.

Faint strains of music joined the squeaking as I approached our back fence. I stopped to hear the music more clearly, now identifiable as singing voices escaping through an open window. I shuffled forward and listened to the notes float out crisply and clearly, then mingle with smoke rising from the chimneys.

Notes and smoke rose together into an icy midnight sky illuminated by frost crystals set shimmering by thousands of stars, and the frosty moon.

I held my breath to hear better and determined that the music was the Christmas carol O Holy Night, and that the notes came from the window in my grandmother's room. It was open to the cold because most people smoked cigarettes back then, and at gatherings cracked a window to clear the air.

They sang the first verse, and when they reached the sixth line, the other voices ceased and one voice carried on alone:

"Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices! O Niiii . . . iight Diii... vine! . . ."

That's the part where the notes rise higher and higher until the singer reaches an awesome note.

The solo voice belonged to my grandmother, Louise LaFrance, and she hit that high note while sitting on the edge of the bed that was her prison. She was crippled with limb-twisting rheumatoid arthritis and suffered searing pain and the humiliation of being bedridden, a humiliation that included needing a bedpan to relieve herself and having her son-in-law lift her into the bathtub.

Each time she hit the high notes at the words 'O Night Divine,' a shiver danced on my spine.

When she finished singing O Holy Night, the other voices started up again, this time with Silent Night and other favourite carols. I went into the house and found Christmas Eve celebrants - my mom, dad and some neighbours - crowded into the 10-foot by 10-foot bedroom that was my grandmother's world. They sang long into the night, mostly in French because the neighbours were the Gauthiers who seldom spoke English to my grandmother and mother.

The crippling arthritis had attacked my grandmother not long after my birth sixteen years before. It advanced quickly, twisting her fingers like pretzels, then deforming her ankles and knees.

She took up smoking to ease the pain. Late into the night I would hear her stir, then listen for the scrape of a wooden match against the side of a box of Redbird matches. Then the acrid odour of sulphur drifted into my room, followed by the sweetness of smoke from a Sweet Caporal.

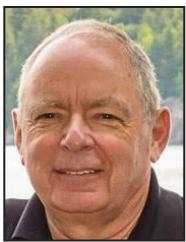
Sometimes I would get up and go to her door and see the red tip of the cigarette glow brightly as she inhaled and I would go in and we would talk in the smoky darkness. Mostly the talk was about growing up and sorting through the conflicts between a teenager and his parents.

After the singing ended that night, my mother served tourtière, which I slathered with mustard. Then we gathered at the tree and opened our gifts.

I have long forgotten what I got that Christmas, and it doesn't matter. My real gift came many years later, and was an understanding of how that frail and twisted body came to produce such powerful and sweet notes.

My gift was the realization that those high notes were not solely the products of the lungs. They were driven by something stronger than flesh - an unbreakable spirit.

They came from strength far beyond anything that a mere body can produce. They came from the will to overcome.



JIM POLING SR.

From *Shaman's Rock*



Delightful deer

This deer on Bobcaygeon Road couldn't have found a more lovely front yard to stand in. /Photo submitted by Guenter Horst

If I want to move well everyday...

I'VE BEEN a personal trainer since 2004.

In that time I've seen oodles of changes in the fitness industry. The curious thing is that the industry keeps changing the way we challenge our bodies yet our bodies are still the same ole human bodies. At the start of the aerobics craze it was dance moves on the floor. Then a step was added and we had step aerobics. Then we put a bunch of stationary bikes in a room and had people pedal to groovy music. Now we have barbells, dumbbells, kettlebells, sandbags and weighted maces to choose from if we wish. It's all so confusing. Confusion often leads to an overwhelming feeling and that often results in inactivity. That is not a formula for improved health.

As a fitness professional I was educated to bring workouts to clients in three different ways:

- **Cardio:** Cardio refers to any activity that increases the heart rate and respiration while using large muscle groups repetitively and rhythmically.
- **Strength:** Strength training (also referred to as resistance training) involves the exercises that are designed to improve strength and endurance.
- **Flexibility:** Range-of-motion exercises or plain old stretching that is meant to keep your muscles elastic and your joints moving well.

For optimal fitness, it was important to do all the types of exercises on a regular basis. Imbalances do occur if one area gets more attention than another area. Raise your hand if you've experienced back pain from lifting weights (my hand is up). Now raise your hand if a strict regimen of stretching solved the problem and has kept the pain away (my hand is up AGAIN).

I believe our focus is all wrong when it comes to fitness. Lately, I've been shifting both my own fitness focus and that of



LAURIE SWEIG

Practical Fitness

my clients by re-establishing priorities. Ultimately, we all want to move well and we want to do that everyday. Basically, that means moving from A to B without pain. We don't need a fancy fitness program to do that. We do need to make a commitment and it can be as simple as moving well everyday.

The beauty of this concept is that you get to define what moving well means to you. Personally, I want to get up in the morning, move around without pain for the entire day. I want to be able to get down to the floor and back up again as gracefully as possible. I want to spend much of my day on my feet moving around the great outdoors. Not only do I want to be this active now, I want to be this active in 10 - 15 years from now.

All of the thought around this subject led me to this statement (repeat after me):

If I want to move well everyday, I need to move well everyday.

That's all there is to it. It's uncomplicated and to the point. Try saying it out loud a few times. Try looking at yourself in the mirror as you say those words. It's powerful, isn't it? It can be. Think about how you are moving now and then think about how you would like to be moving. If there is a difference then it's up to you to make the change. The bottom-line (the very bottom-line) is you can't expect your body to do something tomorrow that you're not doing today. Speaking from experience, it's really empowering to do something you didn't think you could do.

Something to think about.

Laurie Sweig is a certified personal fitness trainer and spinning instructor. She owns and operates The Point for Fitness. She can be reached at laurie@thepointforfitness.com.

Not sure what to do with it? AH ReUse Centres set to re-open

by NICK BERNARD
Times Staff

The following are brief reports of items discussed during a Dec. 9 meeting of Algonquin Highlands council, held virtually.

Three ReUse Centres in Algonquin Highlands are set to be cleaned up and re-opened early in the new year.

The centres allow residents to place good, usable items for other residents, directing those items away from landfills and re-applied to another use, extending the product's lifespan and reducing waste.

Environmental co-ordinator Melissa Murray says while the centres are important for the county's diversion efforts, operating them will be a challenge with regards to the pandemic.

"There's just some considerations that need to be put on the table as far as discussion of when and how those centres could re-open," she said. "They are considered indoor spaces, unfortunately, so they do fall under all ... the COVID protocols that are required for any indoor spaces."

She also pointed out that, because the centres had been closed for over a year, significant maintenance will need to be done. Cleaning each site could take up to a week to finish.

Deputy Mayor Liz Daniels said she couldn't envision the work starting before the new year.

"Being done expeditiously as possible," she said, "But not at the expense of the workload [Public Works has] already got."

In the meantime, there was an agreement to create signage directing residents to other community resources like SIRCH Thrift Warehouse and 4C's Lily Ann thrift store, both in Haliburton.

A motion was passed to proceed with preparations for the re-opening of the ReUse Centres.

Residents can use the Waste Wizard on the township website to learn about what and where they can recycle locally: algonquinhighlands.ca/wastewizard.php

FoodCycler program has a positive result

Murray followed her report on the ReUse Centres with a report on the FoodCycler trial project. Started in 2020, the project distributed 100 commercial FoodCycler compost systems to Algonquin Highlands residents at a reduced rate.

According to Murray's report, the FoodCycler "produces a valuable soil amendment, low in odour and significantly less attractive to wildlife than traditional composting methods."

"I had a trial run with one that belonged to the township," Mayor Carol Moffatt said. "And I'd like one."

In the report, 92 per cent of participants agreed, saying they'd recommend the FoodCycler to others. Reduced cost was an important factor in purchasing decisions, one council also wished to consider before expanding the FoodCycler program.

The 100 FoodCycler units were provided to the township at a reduced cost. Council assigned co-ordinator Murray and her team to explore whether such a discount could be offered again.

Councillor Jennifer Dailloux offered some ideas about how

to proceed with the project, including how to inform the public of its existence.

"I think that's worth thinking about more, so whether the township facilitates the purchases [of more FoodCycler units], or whether the township works really hard on public education to say 'hey folks, here's a really really good thing, we've done it locally, it works fantastically, here's where you can get your hands on one,'" Dailloux said. "I'd be curious to hear more from staff ... on what the best way forward would be."

More information on the FoodCycler program can be found by contacting Melissa Murray. She can be reached at foodcycler@algonquinhighlands.ca

Internet/telephone voting approved for 2022 municipal/school board elections

Municipal clerk Dawn Newhook presented a report on the selection process for the company that will administer the 2022 municipal/school elections. The company selected will be the service provider for the election's internet/telephone voting system.

The next municipal election will be held Oct. 24, 2022. There were five submissions received, with the contract being awarded to Scytl Canada. Scytl was chosen for its ability to demonstrate experience in Ontario municipal elections of this kind. The report stated Scytl's proposal "demonstrated their online voting interface is intuitive and easy to understand with excellent accessibility and security features."

Voting will also be available at the township office for those who don't have phone or internet access. All four municipalities in Haliburton County have chosen to move forward with internet/telephone voting for the 2022 municipal/school board election.

Council meetings on reduced schedule, working around election

A revised schedule for council's 2022 lineup of meetings was agreed to, with council agreeing to reduce its meeting schedule to once per month.

"For the past three election years ... council meetings have been reduced to one per month from June to November," said

the initial staff report provided by Dawn Newhook.

Moffatt agreed, saying that the reduction of meetings was a matter of course.

"Yeah, as soon as nominations open ... the meeting's [have] always gone to one a month," she said.

As per council policy, council meetings are reduced to one per month during December and January on an annual basis. Since 2008, the schedule has varied from reducing only July and August, to reducing May, June, July, August and September, depending on what projects were being carried out that year.

Council also traditionally meets on the last Thursday of each month on the reduced schedule. Since their October meeting will coincide with the municipal election on Oct. 24, it will instead take place on Oct. 13, the second Thursday of the month.

Notice of the meetings will be provided on the township website's events calendar.

Big East access agreement helps winter campers

A small parking area at Big East Lake along Highway 118 has become a popular spot for winter campers. Previous to 2019 this parking lot had been plowed by the company who maintained the highway as they used it as a turnaround location. For a time, maintenance was discontinued, as providing plowing and sanding services to such a remote location was seen as impractical.

However, a new agreement has been reached, and the parking lot will now be plowed in the winter.

Parks, recreation, and trails manager Chris Card says the Big East access has been growing in popularity with winter campers.

"It certainly pales in comparison to what you see in the summer," he said. "But recently, more and more people have been getting into [winter camping]. There's been a lot of advancements in gear that allow people to do it comfortably."

"We're not talking about large numbers, but it is something that is increasing," he continued. "And actually, of the people that we do get going winter camping, that location is the one that many people want to go to."

"Small numbers," he concluded, "but growing."

Committee recommends integrated waste management plan

by STEPHEN PETRICK
Special to the Times

Some Haliburton County officials want to make sure taxpayer money isn't wasted in waste management – and as a result an integrated plan for all four municipalities may soon come.

Action was taken on this plan at a recent Haliburton County service review steering committee meeting, held virtually.

Committee members recommended a consultant be hired to review waste management operations in Algonquin Highlands, Dysart et al, Highlands East and Minden Hills. The resolution they voted on called for a request for proposals to be prepared.

Fifty per cent of the costs of the project would be absorbed by Haliburton County; the other 50 per cent would be divided equally between the four municipalities. The project, however, cannot start unless it's approved by Haliburton County council, plus the councils of each of the four municipalities.

But some members of the steering committee – who also happen to be municipal politicians – said there's some urgency to get the project rolling.

A report to the committee showed that a transition to an in-

tegrated program would take two to five years and, within that time frame, the province is expected to mandate new changes on how landfills are run.

"I think we need the information sooner than later, so we can make medium- and long-term plans," Minden Hills Mayor Brent Devolin said. Committee chairperson and Haliburton County Warden Liz Danielson agreed.

Algonquin Highlands Mayor Carol Moffatt also reiterated the urgency, saying that "big changes" are coming in the world of waste management. That could involve new recycling programs or compost programs. The challenge of bringing in these new programs, she said, is complicated by the fact that different landfills in the county are at different stages of their lifespan.

"The sooner we can set a path for future service for the community, the better," she said.

The work of the winning consultant is expected to cost between \$50,000 and \$70,000. The work would involve coming up with a list of "assets" and analyzing their values and liability. It would also involve comparing and contrasting existing programs and how they could be integrated and proposing different integrated service models and seeing "which model is most suited for the county," the report said.

Haliburton man dies in Hwy. 35 collision

At approximately 10:30 a.m. on Dec. 14, a fatal vehicle collision occurred on Hwy 35, north of Lindsay.

Robert Clark, 64, of Haliburton was pronounced dead at the scene. Two others were transported to a nearby hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

Members of the City of Kawartha Lakes detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police investigated the accident, which involved a dump truck and two SUVs just north of Thunder Bridge Road. The highway remained closed for several hours while the OPP Traffic Collision Investigation team was on scene documenting.

Any witnesses who have not yet spoken to police are asked to contact the investigating officer by calling 1-888-310-1122.



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Bracelet project offers helping hand to those in need

by SUE TIFFIN
Editor

Michael Dillane has been spreading joy this season.

The eight-year-old Minden resident, son of Robin and Rob Dillane, wanted to do something to help others in the community.

"I wanted to have a lemonade stand to raise funds but because of COVID, we brainstormed a new idea with friends and the bracelet idea came up," Michael told the *Times*. "My mom's friend cuts out the bracelet plates, then my mom and I make the bracelet bands and package them."

Michael planned to sell the bracelets – with designs that say brave, smile, loved, be fearless or be kind – for \$5 each.

"When my mom posted them in [a holiday market] group on Facebook, and I had some

sales right away, I thought, I can do this," said Michael.

He was right – not long after, he had raised more than \$200, which he split between the Minden Community Food Centre and Heat Bank Haliburton County.

"I talked about different ways that I could help the community with the funds raised," he said. "The food bank and heat bank are really needed to help people in our community and I like to help people."

The project is one that Michael can see continuing.

"I think the response has been good," he said. "I would like to continue to make bracelets and might think of new ideas throughout the year. To keep supporting the community." So far, Michael is pleased with the results of his efforts.

"This makes me feel good, because I know I'm helping someone," he said.



Michael Dillane, of Minden, has raised \$200 in bracelet sales, which he has donated to the Minden Community Food Centre and Heat Bank Haliburton County. "This makes me feel good, because I know I'm helping someone," he said. Email chipbeandesigns@gmail.com for more information. /Photo submitted by Robin Dillane

Iconic Misty River Farm barn falls after windstorm

by SUE TIFFIN
Editor

"To you it might be a barn, but to us, it was home."

These are the parting words Cindy-Jo Nesbitt left the community in a social media post about the Misty River Farm barn. The well-known barn, standing as an icon on Deep Bay Road for decades, collapsed after a severe windstorm caused widespread damage throughout the province on Dec. 11.

Wendy Connelly, whose family has owned the property the barn was on since her dad Sinc Nesbitt purchased it from Herb Cox in 1962, received a message the morning after the storm that something had happened at the farm. She and her husband Barry drove to the property her nephew Scott now owns.

"Even just coming down the road from Minden, it was always that big dome, that's exactly what you saw," she said of the renowned barn. "I'm sure everybody's attention was along there looking at it, because it's the only barn really left until you get to Roy Kernohan's. The first one going down the road was taken down – they took it down themselves – quite a few years ago. But that one always just seemed to stick out in the field there because there were no trees or anything around it."

Approaching the farm, Connelly realized the barn had fallen.

"I said to Barry, oh my gosh, because it was just flat," said Connelly. "It was unbelievable, really. All of a sudden everything's going through your head about memories, it was ... I was trying not to be emotional."

Walking around the barn, Connelly could see the extent of the damage – thankful there were no animals in it at the time.

"The walls were just – the wall next to the Minden side was laying flat on the ground," she said. "A cement block just laying flat on the ground. And the one over next to the farm was just leaning way out, ready to fall over. It just looked like it had taken that great big domed roof and just lifted it up and smashed it right back down on the foundation. It was flat, but it was right back down. There was no debris out in the fields or anything, it was just all right there where the barn was ... In where the horses used to be in these box stalls, there is nothing in there, not a piece of debris, nothing. It was unbelievable."

Though Connelly said people have told her the barn might be 80 or 90 years old, she said she doesn't think that's the case, and instead thinks the barn might have been built



The windstorm that swept through the province on Dec. 11 caused extensive damage to power lines and took down many trees. In Minden on Deep Bay Road, a barn that once belonged to Sinc Nesbitt on Misty River Farm fell as a result of the winds. /Photo submitted by Cindy-Jo Nesbitt

between 1955 and 1960, based on its style.

After her dad purchased the property, Connelly's grandparents stayed at the farmhouse that winter caring for cattle. Connelly, her parents and brother moved on Halloween day from Carnarvon to a house that replaced the farmhouse in 1963.

Sinc, a former reeve of Stanhope and Minden, councillor of Anson, Hindon and Minden, warden of Haliburton County and the person for which the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena is named, was interested not in cattle, but in horses.

"We had all these show horses and, at one time there were barns up at the back as well, we built wooden stalls and barns up there too, because we had too darn many horses quite a few times," laughed Connelly.

In 1961, Sinc purchased his first Belgian mare, Conqueror's Silver Lady, for only \$1,000 – Connelly noting, "who knows what they're worth now, hundreds of thousands probably."

That was the beginning of a Belgian breeding line that had a reputation for the best breeding and show stock in Canada – at one point the Nesbitts were breeding 20 to 25 mares a year. They attended horse pulls and fairs across the continent,

were captured in numerous photographs and paintings.

"Everybody used to stop there and take pictures because the bush behind it in the autumn was absolutely stunning," said Connelly. "Mom and I used to walk down through the hayfield and take a picture of the barn or the house, the colours, it was just beautiful there."

Besides the family's warm-hearted memories of the barn, there is also a tragic one: Sinc died of a heart attack on July 27, 2000 while in the barn harnessing a horse to take out to the back field. He loved doing work, being with his family, caring for his horses and sitting to tell stories in the barn. Now they're both gone.

"It's the same thing, when they took the big barn out on the highway, across from Ridgewood, everybody was devastated with that, too," said Connelly. "It was a landmark. And I think going down Deep Bay Road, that barn was a landmark. You're just expecting to see it. My cousin said, I can't imagine driving down Deep Bay Road, it just won't be the same at all."

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Flashback to S.S. No. 2 Minden

Linda Schrader and Ron Burk shared an undated copy of an article from the Haliburton County Echo in which a former student shared his memories of S.S. No. 2 Minden. Schrader particularly thought his memory of a Christmas concert that happened at the schoolhouse more than 100 years ago might be of interest to readers at this time of year.

Back in the days of the First World War it was my privilege and pleasure to attend the little frame schoolhouse known as S.S. No. 2 Minden. It was located two miles north of Lochlin and about one-and-a-half miles east of Ingoldsby.

It might well have been known as the "Academy of the Wildwood," such was the knowledge bestowed upon the pupils by the teacher, Miss Florence Crofts. Besides being a first rate teacher of the three "Rs" she was also a born naturalist. Her knowledge of flowers, plants, insects, birds and animals and where to find them was unexcelled.

The pupils came from the homes within a two-mile radius of the school. On the school register were the names of Baker, Burk, Crofts, Fielding, Harrison, Hawkins, Hescott, Hicks, Howe, Johnston, Kitchen, McIntosh, McKnight, McPhee, Roberton, Robertson and Walker. The total enrollment varied from about 14 to 20. During the winter some of the older boys were able to come back to school for a few months.

The custodians of the school were the pupils. Two pupils were assigned each day to sweep the room at noon. One boy, or occasionally a girl, took on the contract of lighting the fire from October to May and carrying the big two-foot blocks of hardwood and kindling from the woodshed. At the end of the job the school board paid the handsome sum of five dollars for the winter's work. Drinking water was carried from a spring about 250 yards down the Lochlin road. It was the highlight of the day to be given permission to go along with a chum for a pail of water.

In the earlier days there was a school inspector in the area who was greatly disliked by all pupils. He usually had all the younger children in tears before he left. He was one person who would never make the Diplomatic Corps. If the rumour came that the Inspector was coming the next day, some of the children stayed home if possible. I remember one fall that word arrived that he would be there the next day. How I wished that I could stay home. As I was nearly home that afternoon I saw Bill Blair's threshing machine moving into our place. Glory be and Hallelujah! Surely I would be able to stay home for the threshing.

When I asked Mother she said, "Oh, they are leaving the machine here for a week or so until your Dad's buckwheat is ready to thresh." My world collapsed. I went to school the next day. The rumour was false, no inspector came and I survived.

Our school bell was one of the largest and best in the county and could be heard far and wide. During one dry autumn when local bush fires were breaking out on the Ramsay Estate the teacher was asked not to ring the bell for school use during that period. If a new fire broke out the word was to be rushed to the school and the bell was to be rung loud and long. This was to alert the farmers to come to fight fire. Speaking of fire and smoke, reminds me of the boys occasionally sneaking over the hill at noon hour to smoke cedar bark cigarettes wrapped in scribbler paper. It is a wonder that the teacher didn't smell smoke from their clothes. Maybe she did, but she was a good sport and not really



In this photo taken around 1935, students from S.S. No. 2 Minden pose as a group: Ruth Baker (Paul), Les Fielding, Harry Burke, Malcolm Anderson, Bruce Crofts, Shirley Emerson, Reg Burk, Wally Crofts, Elsie Baker (McPhail), Doug English, Grant Crofts, Mary Emerson, Isabel Fielding, Mac Burk, Edith Fielding and Gertrude English. / Photo submitted by Ron Burk and Linda Schrader

too hard on any of us, unless we really needed it, and then we all knew who was the boss.

By the first week of January most of the local roads were drifted full of snow and the rail fences were completely covered. There was no horse travel except by draw roads through the sheltered woods and swamps. There were no skis in the area at that time except those owned by Mr. Polaman who lived on the Bethel road. Occasionally he would cut across country on his homemade skis on his way to the store at Lochlin. He and his fine skis were as much attraction to us in the winter as a new model "T" in summer.

Snowshoes were the mode of travel for those who had them. The teacher often used hers to come to school on and to go to Lochlin for the mail and supplies once a week. There was also one boy who lived away from the main roads who used his father's snowshoes most all winter.

During the dry frosty winter weather, everyone wore moccasins, even the teacher. They were lighter and much warmer than the conventional lace-up rubbers and were much better on snowshoes. The deep snow did not hinder the fun at noon or recess. The boys built toboggans from barrel staves and all had a good time on the nearby hills.

The greatest time of all was around the first of December when preparations got under way for the annual Christmas Tree and Concert. Great was the work done by the teacher and the girls as they made wonderful costumes and decorations. The boys also had their share of work to do, especially a day or so before the big event when the school was festooned with great balsam and spruce bows hanging from the beams. On a Saturday a week or so before the concert, Alex and Levi Burk would appear on the scene with a team and sleigh and enough lumber to build the stage, which they built before leaving. Next, someone with a team and sleigh would bring an organ or piano from a nearby home. Later on others would arrive with any coal oil lamps that they could spare from home.

All the boys and a neighbour with a team and sleigh would go for a Christmas tree. It had to be the best and I think it usually was. It didn't matter where the tree was cut as the school was welcome to a tree from any farmer's woods.



S.S. No. 2 Minden, today. /Photo by Linda Schrader

The Rev. J.M. White and the Rev. Geo. C. Grant used to vie for who would be chairman for the great event. They had to drive from either Haliburton or Minden with horse and cutter, so the honour must have been great.

When the great night arrived it seemed that everyone for many miles around was there. It was a bit of a shock to see your classmates without their heavy mackinaws and sweaters and heavy rubbers. All the boys wore white shirts, Sunday suits and fresh home-made haircuts. And those lovely girls with their hair curled and fancy dresses on – man, oh man, this was some "do."

Andy Roberton was doorkeeper and collected the 15 cents from each adult. I believe the chairman got in free.

Our teacher was a lovely singer and could play the piano and organ to perfection. We had the very best training for our songs and drills.

The opening chorus by the children was a thing of great perfection, as I remember it. After the chairman's address, things really started to roll. Recitations, dialogues, drills, duets and skits and then for a breather either Farmer John Emmerson or Percy Burk gave a few floor-thumping violin selections. After one of these musical numbers, I remember the Rev. G.C. Grant saying that he thought the audience had Methodist heads

and Presbyterian feet. ... As the final chorus brought the program to a close, the pupils snapped briskly and stiffly to attention for the "King." Then followed the main event of the night. Someone acted as Santa and there were gifts and bags of candy and nuts for everyone.

Occasionally a Basket Social followed with Hank Harrison or Allie Baker acting as auctioneer. There were 10 cent lunches for the children and for any who did not get a basket. Those wonderful 10 cent lunches were a meal in themselves. Plenty of sandwiches made from home-made bread and butter, cake, cookies, doughnuts and tarts and maybe a piece of Christmas cake too. Truly the Christmas Concerts at S.S. No. 2 were the sterling event of the year.

On one of these occasions Ken Austin of Lochlin who had recently joined a Scottish Regiment and was home on leave, came in his kilt. It added sparkle to the gathering to have a soldier in uniform present, but poor Ken soon pushed his way through to the big box stove to warm his hairy knees.

At one of the basket socials a very substantial sum of money was taken in. After the Christmas holiday the teacher bought a phonograph and records for the school. This was a wonderful reward for the children for their

see FRIDAY page 11



Help for the holidays

Rotaract – Haliburton Highlands packed and delivered personalized Basic Needs Boxes to families in Haliburton County just in time for the holidays. "Thank you to all of our wonderful donors for making this possible," read a post on their Facebook page. "If you or someone you know is in need of a box this winter, please reach out to us at [haliburtonrotaract@gmail.com!](mailto:haliburtonrotaract@gmail.com)" Clockwise from back left: Andrew Mansfield, Rebecca Anderson, Christine Carr, Vivian Collings and Emily Stonehouse. /Photo submitted by Rotaract – Haliburton Highlands

Friday afternoon field trips served as botanical expeditions

from page 10

diligent work in class and the splendid concert that they had helped to put on. In those days a phonograph was a far greater luxury than a colour TV is today. At that time there were only about two in the whole community.

One year we had a Summer Concert and Basket Social on the third of June. Lieutenant Hunt of the Salvation Army, who was holding meetings at Lochlin, was chairman. This concert was a great success and a large crowd attended. And there was one car there. This in itself was quite an attraction. There was one boy about eight years old who had 30 cents with him and when the baskets were being auctioned off by Hank Harrison he would bid 30 cents on each basket as it was offered for sale. Needless to say, he didn't get one. So he quite happily bought a 10 cent lunch and ate with the fellows. Later, when the lunch was about over, the father of the boy came to take him home. As it was a warm summer evening and the windows open, the father just hauled the boy out through the window amidst the laughter of his classmates.

Arbor Day was a welcome break from school routine. Every one looked forward to that day. On the afternoon before, the teacher assigned duties to all pupils. Some were to house-clean the inside of the school by washing windows, floor and blackboards. Others worked outdoors preparing the flower beds and sowing seeds and bulbs. Trees were trimmed and grass burned, and each year a few large stones were moved from the school yard. Some of the boys would remove the earth that the Trustees had banked the school with the fall before.

All work was to be done by afternoon recess. Then the

teacher, with help from the girls, made a huge batch of candy. This was a great reward for our labours; all the candy you could eat and maybe some to take home to little brothers and sisters.

On a Friday afternoon toward the end of June, the teacher would take us on an expedition into the fields and forests for flowers, ferns and anything of interest in the great outdoors. She took us through dense woods and steamy swamps to a little lake where the Pitcher plants grew in abundance. The bright red long-stemmed blossoms made them easy to find. Every kind of local wild flower seemed to be at its best in that part of the woods. There were violets with stems six to eight inches long and beautiful Ladies Slippers. The names and locations of plants and trees that the teacher taught us were never forgotten. In schools of higher learning these hikes would be properly known as botanical expeditions. I often wonder if the modern central schools give a child the well moulded all round education that we received in the one-room country school. I doubt it very much.

All this sounds like one continuous round of pleasure, but actually a lot of diligent teaching, training and learning was carried out, and all courses of study were completed well before the term ended. Some of the pupils of those well remembered days have passed on to a Higher Level of Learning and we cherish their memory.

And now as I close, may I dedicate these memoirs to that gracious lady, the teacher who was our friend and guide in those happy days, Mrs. Percy Burk, who still resides in the community.

Old Boy of the Class of '21



Dorset library lockers in place

Lee Ross and Mike Hinbest of Robinson's General Store, and Chris Stephenson of the Haliburton County Public Library show what the library locker system in Dorset looks like. "We are really excited about this unique public-private partnership, and about this local business stepping up to help us restore a basic library service temporarily in the Dorset area," said Stephenson. /Photo submitted by HCPL



A sign of the times

Home Hardware assistant manager Carol Mowat, left, and Chris Stephenson, CEO of the Haliburton County Public Library, show the four new sandwich board signs that Minden Home Hardware built for the library. "This will help us inform library patrons at our Highlands East branches that the facility is open – they have long driveways, typically, so it's hard to see from the road in some cases if we're open for business," said Stephenson. He said HCPL is grateful for Mowat and her staff in the lumber yard "who worked hard to create these beautiful (and lightweight!) signs." /Photo submitted by HCPL

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Jingling all the way

EarlyON Child and Family Centre staff were singing and dancing with bells on in Minden on Dec. 20, for a Jingle Bells Sing-Along and Giveaway event held outdoors at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre. Here, program co-ordinator Julie Bosker waves to a little one tuning in from home. The fun event was held in 11 different communities, at a drive-in or socially distanced gathering, over three days. /SUE TIFFIN Staff



After singing and dancing the morning away, kids received a craft and some jingle bells to take home.



Jingle bells, Christmas tree crafts, song and dance brought parents and caregivers and kids together in Minden on Dec. 20.

Smiles and pure joy were on full display at the EarlyOn Jingle Bells Sing-Along and Giveaway event, where kids and their parent or caregiver were able to listen to Christmas songs and join in by singing or dancing.

Giving for good

The space under a Christmas tree was filled with food and toy donations for the Minden Community Food Centre thanks to the RE/MAX Professionals North team, all who donated and some who are pictured here: from left, Kelly Mercer, Lisa Mercer, Lynda Litwin, Terry Carr and Cheryl Smith. /Photo submitted by RE/MAX Professionals North



Math students find the formula to make great art

by STEPHEN PETRICK
Special to the Times

Math students at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School (HHSS) have found the formula to make great works of art.

Students in HHSS teacher Amy Klose's advanced math functions course were recently given an interesting challenge: They were asked to use equations to create an image or animation in a program called Desmos.

"The students' level of engagement and interest in the task seems to have taken on a life of its own," Klose wrote in an

email.

The program gives the students an electronic grid. They then need to write equations to guide the movements of lines they wish to create. The students were asked to use at least 25 equations to complete their artwork, however some students used more than 100 equations. One student created an animation of a beating heart. Others did landscape scenes or other interesting artworks, based on the use of circles and intersecting lines.

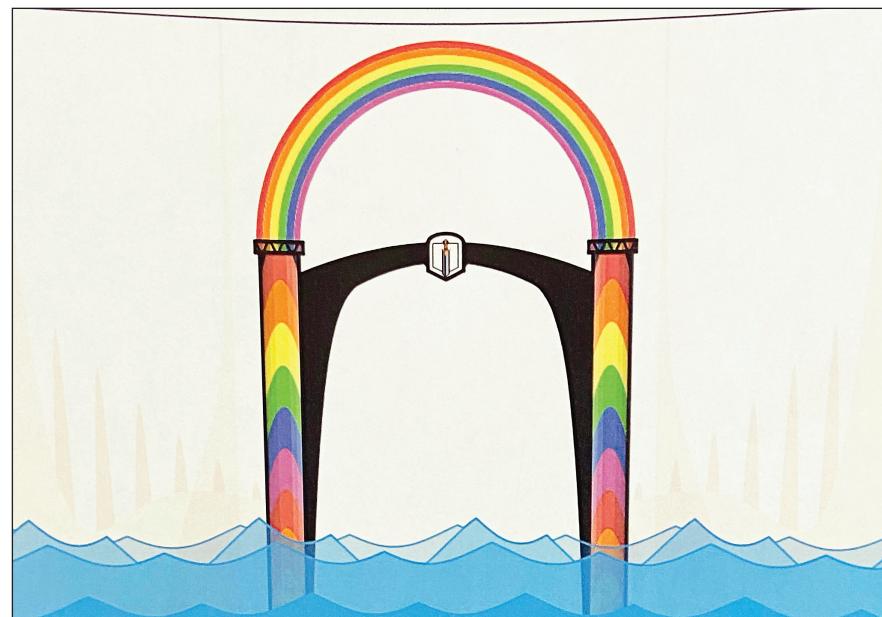
Students also had to write an explanation of the mathematics they used to create the piece. It's not an easy task – the course is designed to prepare students for university math –

but the students were up for the challenge.

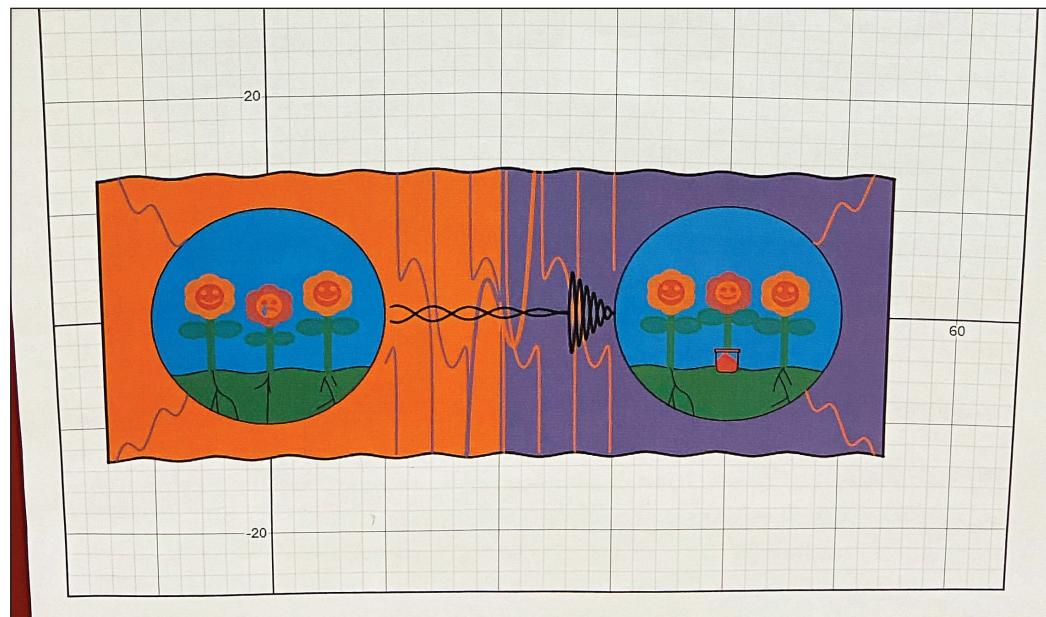
"I am very impressed by their work," Klose wrote. "This year's crew far surpassed my expectations. They took it upon themselves to explore their passions and then use functions to bring their interests to life."

She added that the students learned techniques on their own and shared their knowledge with classmates.

"This is complex, time-consuming and incredibly detailed work. This cohort of students has demonstrated a very high level of persistence, collaboration and creativity."



One Haliburton Highlands Secondary School student created artwork they called Rainbow Gate using a program called Desmos.



Haliburton Highlands Secondary School student Courtney Semach created this image showing flowers. /Photos submitted by Brianne Pockett

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YEAR ROUND SERVICE



Roughly ten days 'fore Christmas, and just down the road, into S.G. Nesbitt arena one Santa Claus strode ...

A Visit from St. Nicholas to the Minden Skating Club

... The kids were excited, hopped up from the skate, now quick to meet Santa, before it's too late! ...



... His white beard was flowing, his red suit pristine – he visited Minden on Dec. 17...



... There was a whole lineup that stretched down the hall – a wonderful visit with Santa for all! /NICK BERNARD Staff

○ CELEBRATING DIVERSITY ○ 2022 PERFORMANCES ○



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St. George's Anglican Church, Haliburton

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August 6th | 7:30pm | location TBD

More opera and musical theatre favourites.

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Relaxed concert and conversation featuring varied music other than opera.

MUSIC ON THE BAY

August 13th | 5:30pm | Fairfield Bay, Mountain Lake

Launch your boat on Mountain Lake, Minden Hills, and join HOS performers in Fairfield Bay for a concert of opera, musical theatre, and pop! (Weather permitting)

CASUAL SONG SOIREE

August 15th | 7:30pm | St. George's Anglican, Haliburton

Relaxed concert of all types of songs.



Highland Storm under-11 rep player Brycen Harrison, who had an assist, battles for a loose puck against Newcastle Stars player Aiden Tomlinson.

A focus on fans

Haliburton County Huskies captain Nathan Porter, at left, signs an autograph for a young fan following the game against the visiting Cobourg Cougars on Saturday, Dec. 18 at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena in Minden. The team also invited a Highland Storm minor hockey team to tour the dressing room. / DARREN LUM Staff



Storm reach for the Stars

Highland Storm under-11 rep player Levi Rowe battles for a loose puck against Newcastle Stars player Camden Muirhead on Thursday, Dec. 16 at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena in Minden. The Storm won 6-2 and improved to 6-3-0. Storm goals were scored by Travis Rowe, who had three, Duncan Evans-Fockler, Cruize Neave, and Hawksley Dobbins. Assists came from Rowe, Evans Fockler, Brycen Harrison, Lyla Degeer (two), Hunter Hamilton (two), and Tyler Hughes. Rowe has 16 goals this season. Storm goalie Colten Simms earned the win. /DARREN LUM Staff

Skate with the pack this New Year's Day

Huskies welcome public for free skate at A.J. LaRue Arena

DARREN LUM

Editor

Get ready, Haliburton County: the Haliburton County Huskies are coming to the A.J. LaRue Arena for New Year's Day.

During the Municipality of Dysart et al's committee of the whole meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 7 via YouTube, Mayor Andrea Roberts announced the township's invitation was accepted by the Ontario Junior Hockey League's (OJHL) Huskies, who are expected to hold a team practice, followed by two public skate sessions.

Roberts, who is one of the team's billet families, providing accommodations to a player, said she asked the Huskies coach Ryan Ramsay about coming to the A.J. LaRue Arena.

"How can we get you to come to Haliburton? Come to our arena and do something?" she said. "I was trying to do something before Christmas, but their schedule's a little crazy and then he said, 'What about New Year's Day?'"

The mayor said even though it's a statutory holiday, township staff are required to come to the arena for three hours, anyway, so it worked out.

The cost of the event, which is in lieu of the annual New Year's Eve skating party, is

being covered by the township through the community event budget.

Although the attendance of the practice and the public skate is free, the team is accepting donations for the Haliburton 4Cs Food Bank.

The Huskies will have a team practice from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. and then welcome the public to skate with them for two sessions. The first will start at 3:15 p.m. and end at 4 p.m. for ice flooding. The second will be at 4:15 p.m. and end at 5 p.m.

Since they were relocated from Whitby by proud Haliburtonian and Huskies alumnus Paul Wilson, the Huskies have been drawing hundreds to every home game. MPP Laurie Scott even spoke about the success of the team, including local players Joe Boice and Ryan Hall, at the provincial legislature in Queen's Park last week. As of Dec. 10, the Huskies are second in the OJHL's east division and have been a top-five team in defence in terms of goals allowed in the league. They also feature the league's top goal scorer, Oliver Tarr (21 goals), as of Dec. 10.

Pre-register for the event by going to the Municipality of Dysart's website: www.dysartetal.ca. Registration opens on Dec. 20. As pandemic-related public health measures and restrictions change, those planning to attend this event should look for updates on the Dysart et al website.



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Nordic ski racing returns to the Hawks

by DARREN LUM
Times Staff

They're back.

The Red Hawks Nordic ski team is making a comeback after a six year absence and couldn't come at a more opportune time for its coaches and athletes.

Co-coach Mike Rieger appreciates this opportunity to bring back the program and hopes it could mark the start of a return.

"Hopefully, we can manage to make it work [so] that skiing can come back and have good interest and the other winter

sports can kind of get back to what they were before COVID as well," he said.

This team has been more than a foundation for competitive success with multiple all-provincial berths during its existence, but it has also encouraged a love for Nordic skiing and a healthy active lifestyle.

"In high school there is a lot of sports [where the] peak of their sports career is going to be what they do in high school and it's hard to carry on, if you think about a sport like basketball ... it doesn't [even] run all year, whereas something like skiing you can do that for the rest of your life whenever you want. There's so much more accessibility that comes

[with] a sport like that than some of the more traditional team-oriented high school sports," he said.

Rieger said he started Nordic skiing as a young boy and then stopped when he was in his teens. Although up until a few years ago he didn't ski for several years, he embraced the opportunity to ski the dozens of kilometres of groomed trails, which are part of the Haliburton Highlands Nordic Trail and Ski Club Association. It has rekindled his love of the winter endurance sport.

During the pandemic and associated uncertainty of what is allowed, Nordic skiing is one of a few competitive options available to Haliburton Highlands Secondary School students this year.

Bringing this program back is important, Rieger said.

"It just seems like a good opportunity to be able to introduce a sport to more students and I know there's sort of a lot of curiosity about how sports are going to reshuffle through COVID and beyond. And skiing just seemed like a great chance to be able to at least bring a program [back] that's got a strong history and Haliburton certainly has a strong cross-country skiing community," he said.

The last time there was a team was in the 2015/2016 season when the team was coached by Jennifer Paton, and included Nordic ski standouts Brynn Meyers and Jessica Bishop. Both earned all-provincial, OFSAA (Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations) championship berths.

He adds the past few years has seen a reduction in Nordic ski team members because of how strong the other sports teams were in the winter, whether it was girls' volleyball or boys' basketball.

Coaching isn't new for Rieger, who was part of the Red Hawks basketball program for eight years prior to the pandemic in 2019. Coaching Nordic ski racing is new to him though. He is coaching the team with Karen Gervais, who was the school's cross country coach this past autumn.

About a month ago, there was a meeting with coaches from all of the six schools based in Kawartha (HHSS, Lakefield College, Adam Scott Collegiate Vocational Institute, Crestwood Secondary School, St. Peter Catholic Secondary School and Thomas Aquinas Secondary School).

Rieger said there was a collaborative atmosphere at the meeting among the coaches, who all recognize the different levels of skill levels and racing experiences among the high school skiers.

"There's some kids that are racing club [level of competition]. There's some kids that are quite athletic that maybe don't race club that are going to race on school teams. There's a lot of kids that it's brand new for them," he said. "So they tried to set up a couple of meets where the coaches from all the schools help out and they take some groups of kids and do a bit of teaching and then hold a race at the end."

Thus far, there are nine students on the HHSS Nordic team preparing for the season with dry land training after school. They will be representing the red and white skiing in the junior girls and senior boys categories.

Rieger said the expectation is to hold two invitational competitions in January, which will be followed by the COSSA (Central Ontario Secondary School Associations) championship where competitors will compete for an opportunity to earn a berth to the OFSAA championship.

The first one, which will be organized as an intro-to-racing format for racers and coaches, will be hosted at the Kawartha Nordic Ski Club, which is also the home venue for Lakefield College. The second one could be held at Glebe Park in Haliburton a week later and will focus on ascending and descending techniques, utilizing the predominant challenges of the hilly terrain there.

Rieger said for Haliburton to host a race will be based on COVID-19 protocols and related transportation options for teams from schools based in Peterborough. Dates and locations remain open to change.

Keep track of what's happening in Minden on Instagram

@MindenTimes



Dribble and swish

Pick-up basketball is alive and well for now. Players work up a sweat during the informal recreational opportunity on Thursday evening, Dec. 16 at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena in Minden. COVID-19 protocols are in place to use the facility. From a sign, pick-up basketball is inclusive where players of all abilities are welcome. /DARREN LUM Staff



Minden Lions roar at hunger

Twins Norry, Scott Moore, Joanne Barnes and Paul Norry met last week when the Minden Lions Club made a \$1,000 donation to the Minden Community Food Centre for the Christmas basket program. /Photo submitted



A red and green Christmas

Santa Claus waves from a comfortable seat at Robinson's General Store, where he greeted children last weekend in Dorset in front of a glorious green backdrop. /Photo submitted

Happy curlers

The members of the Wednesday Ladies Curling League were very happy to get back to the Minden Curling Club this fall. We had a good first session and will be back in January.



In first place ...

From left: Michelle Hall (Lead), Joyce Nilsson (Skip), Sandra Slauenwhite-Box (Vice) and Sandria Garry (Second, sparing for Suzy Landry).



In second place ...

From left, Meribeth Barron (Lead), Debbie Walker (Second), Donna Peneycad (Skip) and Judy Webb (Vice). /Photos submitted by Mickey Bonham

Huskies down Canadiens and Cougars

by ALEX GALLACHER
Special to the Times

The Haliburton County Huskies gave their fans a rare treat in the hockey world, two back-to-back home games on back-to-back days. Playing host to their first ever meeting against the Toronto Jr. A Canadiens on Friday, Dec. 17 and facing off against the Cobourg Cougars for the final time on Saturday, Dec. 18 Huskies fans got their money's worth as both games were a spectacle to behold.

On Friday, the Huskies jumped out to an early lead. Lucas Stevenson buried a feed from Oliver Tarr close to a minute in the game to give the hometown team the early lead. Two minutes later and Peyton Schaly doubled that lead, with Highland Storm alumnus Ryan Hall picking up an assist.

Bryce Richardson closed out a three goal run for the Huskies, before Liam Fedek got the Canadiens on the board at 17:36 of the first.

The second period saw only one goal, coming off the stick of Huskies forward Christian Stevens. However, the penalties were through the roof. In total, 10 separate penalties were awarded with seven and game misconduct going Toronto's way and three going against the Huskies.

Toronto's Matthew Wilde was ejected from the game following a hit from behind on a Huskies player, while teammates Ben Loretto and Brad Ditillo combined for five different penalties. The Canadiens added two more goals late in the third, one with the net empty, to cut the lead down to one late. The



Haliburton County Huskies forward Joe Boice, from right, battles with a Toronto Jr. A Canadiens defender in front of Canadiens goalie Selby Warren during Ontario Junior Hockey League action on Friday, Dec. 17 at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena in Minden./DARREN LUM Staff

Huskies would prove too much for Toronto, as Haliburton County went on to win a fifth straight.

Friday saw another rematch against the

Cobourg Cougars. The Cougars have yet to beat Haliburton County at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena, with the closest result being a 3-3 tie back in November.

That being said, the Cougars and Huskies went scoreless in the first.

At 6:42 in the second, the deadlock was

see WIN page 19

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Win is sixth in a row for the Huskies

from page 18

broken. Cougars player George Krotiris fired home a shot which snuck past Christian Cicigoi, giving the visitors the lead as the teams returned to the locker rooms.

The Huskies have a calling card it seems, in many a game they give up the first goal but storm back for the win. This game was no exception.

With the Cougars goaltender Justin Easter making highlight reel save after highlight reel save, the Huskies threw everything they had at him. A total of 50 shots were pelted at Easter by the Huskies, and eventually his luck ran out.

Schaly kicked off the festivities, streaking down the right side wing to get a clear shot at Easter.

Cutting across the net, Schaly found some daylight and the sellout crowd was brought to their feet.

The physical play was amped up tenfold, as West Guilford's Joe Boice was slinging his body around delivering three monster hits. As the clock ticked away, both teams were growing ever so hungry for the go-ahead goal.

That goal came with 2:41 left to go in the third, and it would come off the stick of co-OJHL leading goal scorer Oliver Tarr. Getting the puck at centre ice, Tarr was sent streaking down the right wing. Instead of cutting across, Tarr fired a powerful shot top shelf to give the Huskies their first lead of the night.

Patrick Saini added the empty netter to seal the deal for the Huskies, who claimed win number six in a row.



"That was 110 per cent playoff hockey," coach Ryan Ramsay said. "This group is special, they are resistant and they work hard non-stop. Doesn't matter what the score is, this team finds ways to win. Our guys have a lot of character in the room and we have a good mix of size, speed and strength, so that's helped us string wins together and I'm really happy."

For Schaly, he has started to hit his stride as a member of the Huskies. Since being acquired from Wellington, the Barrie forward has eight goals as a member of the team and is on a run of four games in a row with a goal

scored.

"We got something really special here," Schaly said. "The fans give us so much energy and make it so hard for other teams to play in this building. We feel like a championship team and I think if we stick to our systems we will keep winning like this."

With his 23rd goal of the season, Tarr sits atop the league lead. Only his second goal in the past five games, Tarr commented on the brewing rivalry between the teams having played each other nearly eight times before the holiday break.

"It was a hard fought game," Tarr said.

Haliburton County Huskies forward Ethan Gonsalves, in white, looks for the puck, as Toronto Jr. A Canadiens defenders Hayden Heinrich backchecks while teammate and goalie Christian Trianni clears the puck during Ontario Junior Hockey League action on Friday, Dec. 17 at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena in Minden. The Huskies hung on for the 4-3 win./DARREN LUM Staff

"We have played Cobourg so many times before Christmas and the rivalry is going to be there. We like to run and gun and play physical hockey. We've come out on top in the last few contests, so that's always going to stir the pot a little bit."

The Huskies will now officially take a break for Christmas and pending any public health changes, are set to return Dec. 29 in Mississauga to take on the Chargers before returning to the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena on New Year's Eve for a 2:30 p.m. matinee against the Caledon Admirals.



WWW.HUSKIESHOCKEY.CA

Tickets are now available for purchase 45 minutes prior to puck drop at the door.

December 31 @ 2:00 p.m.
vs Caledon Admirals

January 2 @ 2:30 p.m.
vs Toronto Junior Canadiens

January 7 @ 7:30 p.m.
vs Mississauga Chargers

January 13 @ 7:30 p.m.
vs Mississauga Chargers

Donate a new unwrapped toy or unperishable food item and be entered for a chance to win a Huskies game Jersey.



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GET TO KNOW THE HUSKIES: CHRISTIAN CICIGOI

by ALEX GALLACHER
Special to the Times

In a game of hockey, arguably the most important member of the team is the last of the defence: the goalie.

For the Haliburton County Huskies, their guardian of the crease is Thunder Bay's Christian Cicigoi. Riding a .923 save percentage with 16 wins and a 2.36 GAA, Cicigoi has been a valuable addition to the Huskies since being acquired on Oct. 12.

Since making his debut against the Cobourg Cougars and putting up a shutout, the Huskies fans have embraced Cicigoi with open arms making him a fan favourite.

Starting his career out as a player, Cicigoi was inspired to become a goalie after watching highlights from then NHL titan Martin Brodeur. Since then, Cicigoi laced up the pads and the rest is history.

"I actually started out as a player," Cicigoi said. "I saw some videos online of NHL players like Martin Brodeur and I was a big Canadiens fans so lots of Carey Price's highlights. When I first became a goalie, my parents were a little bummed because I was a really good player but I fell in love with being a goalie and I've loved it ever since."

Being from Thunder Bay, Cicigoi grew up in a town with a rich hockey landscape. NHL stars like Jack Adams, Matt Murray, Mackenzie Blackwood and the Staal family



all hail from the Gateway to the West, and Cicigoi looks to add his name to a long list of Thunder Bay hockey talent.

Minden is a very similar place to Thunder Bay, and the transition has been relatively easy.

"We are pretty lucky to have a lot of pro players from Thunder Bay," Cicigoi added. "I've been able to skate with a lot of NHL talent and my goalie coach is a really good coach. Coming here, the transition has been great, I was really prepared for this opportunity and I love playing here."

Cicigoi is one of only a handful of players to have played in the OHL. Suited up for the North Bay Battalion in seven games during the 2019-20 season, Cicigoi wasn't able to win any games but the experience was incredibly valuable for him.

"I was really fortunate to get the opportunity to play with the Battalion," Cicigoi said. "I've learned a lot, I've made a lot great friendships but most important I've learned what it takes to play at the next level and bring it to this team now."

One of Cicigoi's main drives on the ice is to get better every single day. Each practice and each game, Cicigoi is working hard to improve his game in some way. Embracing the team, Cicigoi has one desire on game nights and that's to win.

With his strong debut performance, and his subsequent stellar play, there is nothing he feels his team can't do this season.

"It was crazy because one day I was working out and I got a call from Coach Ryan Ramsay," Cicigoi added. "He asked me to be a Husky and told me about the program, the town, and my parents were super excited about it. I got down here and in less than two days I was suiting up for my first game action in quite a while. The guys here make it so easy for me and we got the win."

Being a goalie is unlike any other position in hockey. The goalie is usually the last line of defence against some of the toughest opposition in the OJHL, but that can usually lead to lots of amazing moments ... and lots of flack. It's usually the goalie that has to wear a loss on them, and gets much of the criticism from armchair coaches. However, Cicigoi doesn't seem to mind as those kind of moments only make him play harder for the win.

"A lot of it is mental and physical preparations," Cicigoi said. "Being a goalie is much different, sometimes you get way too much spotlight and everyone is praising you and other times you're getting all the blame for a loss. That's what I like, I love the spotlight and I love controlling the game and that's what makes it so much fun."

The East division has last to first sepa-

Starting Haliburton County Huskies goalie Christian Cicigoi turns aside a shot with Toronto Jr. A Canadiens forward Liam Fedak looking for a rebound during the game on Friday, Dec. 17 at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena in Minden. Cicigoi has been a standout for the Huskies this season. He came into the Canadiens game with a 2.28 GAA (goals allowed average) and a save percentage of .923. / DARRIN LUM Staff

Sudoku brought to you by

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		3		1	2			
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5		7			8			
6						1		
				5	3	4		
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	5			3				

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 21

rated by only 11 points, with the teams being so close, almost every single game is a playoff game. The Huskies have both the least amount of goals allowed in the division and the best record at home with seven wins, three losses and a tie.

For Cicigoi, each and every game is a challenge and never a throwaway. Even teams in the basement can prove challenging, when the basement in the East division is only nine points behind.

"It's good for our team and it teaches us how to win," Cicigoi added. "The older guys on the team, like myself, know what it takes to win and it's good preparation come play-off time. It's really fun being in every game and I've learned a lot."

Being the starting goalie means that Cicigoi has a mentorship role of the backups. While number two goalie Christian Linton has been injured, Cicigoi has had a revolving door of backups all of whom have learned from the starter.

"They help our team much more than they realize," Cicigoi said. "Being a positive influence on the bench, supporting the team and wanting to win. When you're not playing and have to sit on the bench it sucks, but our backups have always found a way to impact the game positively. Making jokes, giving support after a tough play, they don't realize just how much they help us out there."

With so much fan support, so many young fans have come out to the game looking for autographs, fist bumps and a chance to meet their favourite player. The Huskies are the first team to call Minden home since the Minden River Kings of the GMHL back in 2008.

Cicigoi knows what it's like to be a young fan looking up to his hockey heroes, as back home in Thunder Bay the hottest ticket in town is for the Lakehead Thunderwolves, the local USports team. He can remember looking to meet the players after a night of hockey at the Fort Williams Gardens.

"When I was younger we would go to the local University games," Cicigoi concluded. "I was that little kid that was looking up to the older guys. It feels cool to be that older guy now and I love making the kids smile. Being an inspiration for those kids is really special."

As the season goes on, look for Cicigoi to be an impenetrable brick wall as the Huskies push for the playoffs.

GENERATIONS

In the Night Before Christmas

A (slightly spooky) short story by Lillian Ramsdale

Douglas would have been impressed by how much his neck hurt, if it wasn't for how much his neck hurt. He'd gone to bed a few hours ago on Christmas Eve and now it was nearly one in the morning. He always spent these dark hours staring at the white ceiling, listening to his wife snoring and trying to think about nothing. That's what everyone told him – 'just don't think about it.'

Deciding the internet's sleep advice was useless, as he'd thought all along, he got out of the bed as soundlessly as possible so as not to wake his family in the next room. He tiptoed downstairs to get the latest pain meds he'd been prescribed. He filled a glass of water and downed the pills. As he looked out the window, he smiled as the full moon shining on the new-fallen snow reminded him of his younger years. What he'd give to have a back that worked again.

A loud thud, followed by an immense crashing noise, shook him out of his reverie so violently that he spilled the rest of his water on his chin and down his shirt. It's just the snow letting go, he told himself as his hands quivered.

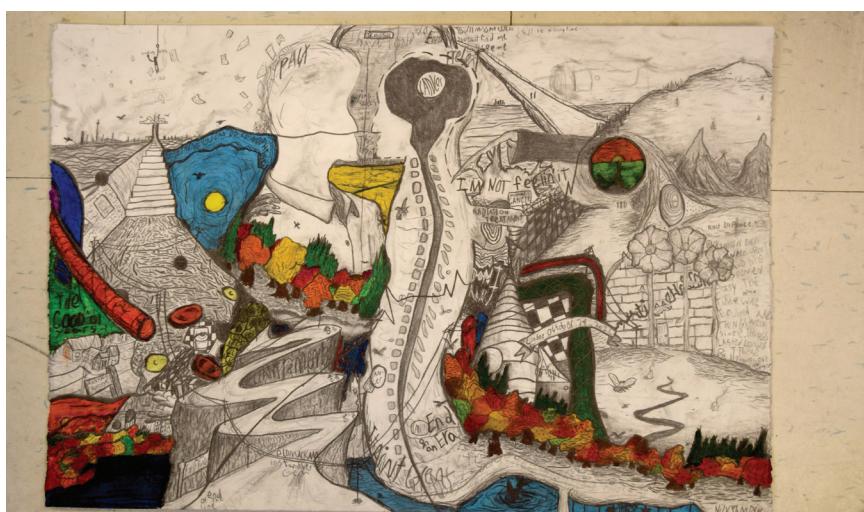
Douglas began his way back up the stairs to get back into bed but, as he passed the living

room, he saw a shadow move out of the corner of his eye. He turned to see a huge shape blocking the light from the gas fireplace.

Douglas found himself frozen in fear as it studied him. The figure was immense, bigger than the Christmas tree and hunched over to fit in the room. It wore a huge fur-lined hood that cast its face in shadow and its eyes seemed to reflect the little light there was in the room, glowing round circles that paralyzed Douglas. The smell of smoke permeated the room, filling his nostrils. As Douglas stood there, not daring to stir, the figure started to move again.

The horrifying creature lifted a sack off its shoulder, setting it on the living room floor silently. A gleaming smile full of rotting teeth appeared beneath the dreadful eyes and its whole body began to convulse, quivering and shaking like a bowl full of jelly as it laughed. It took a step toward him, a step that should have shaken the house but was deathly silent. Douglas finally broke out of his trance, stumbling back up the stairs. He tripped in his haste and his head hit the hard tile stairs and his vision began to swim. He could feel its breath on his pained neck as it spoke.

"Merry Christmas to all..." The Creature paused and chuckled quietly. "And to all a good night." And the world went dark.



Title: Ode To Bob

Artist: Nick Pamplin

Media: Pencil and oil pastel on paper

Bob Annable was a good family friend of ours. He was a great gardener and an even better person. Cancer took him too soon, but he left a lasting impression on me and how to live life well. So – thank you Bob, till we meet again.

THE TOWNSHIP OF MINDEN HILLS

IN SEASON, EVERY SEASON

Notice of Refusal

Concerning a Zoning By-Law Amendment
1613A Hunter Creek Road PLZBA2020075

TAKE NOTICE THAT on December 9th, 2021 the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Minden refused an application under Section 34 of the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990 in respect of Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment File PLZBA2020075.

AND TAKE NOTICE THAT the purpose and effect of the Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment PLZBA2020075 was to change the zone category on certain lands located in Part Lot 5, Concession 14, Geographic Township of Lutterworth and being Parts 5 and 6 of Plan 19R-9887 known as 1613A Hunter Creek Road; located on the Gull River. The subject property is currently zoned 'Shoreline Residential Exception Fifty-Seven (SR-57). The application is requesting that the property be rezoned in order to allow for the conversion of the existing (former) motel units (6) into dwelling units for long term rental.

AND TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT prior to the refusal of the Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment for file PLZBA2020075, Council received oral and written submissions which were considered prior to the refusal of the application.

Lands Affected:

A key map showing the location of the lands to which the application applies is provided below.

Reasons for Refusal:

Council provided the following reasons for refusal of Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment # PLZBA2020075:

1. The application fails to conform to the Official Plan for the Township of Minden Hills.

APPEALS:

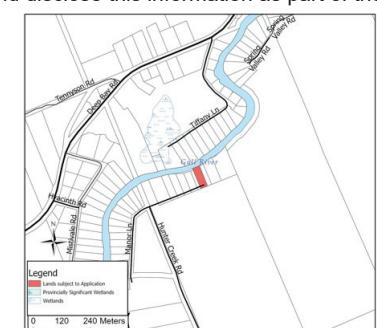
TAKE NOTICE THAT an appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) in respect of Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment #PLZBA2020075 may be submitted by filing with the Clerk of the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills a notice of appeal not later than January 5th, 2022. The notice of appeal must set out the objection to the decision and the reason in support of the objection, and be accompanied by a certified cheque or money order in Canadian Funds payable to the Minister of Finance in the amount of \$1,100.00 which represents the Tribunal's fee.

ACCESSIBILITY: The Township of Minden Hills is committed to providing services as set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. If you have accessibility needs and require alternative formats or other accommodations, please contact the undersigned.

PRIVACY DISCLOSURE: As one of the purposes of the Planning Act is to provide for planning processes that are open and accessible, all written submissions, documents, correspondence, e-mails or other communications (including your name and address) form part of the public record and may be disclosed/made available by the Township as deemed appropriate, including anyone requesting such information. Please note that by submitting any of this information, you are providing the Township with your consent to use and disclose this information as part of the planning process.

Dated this 21st day of December, 2021

Trisha McKibbin, Clerk
7 Milne Street, P.O. Box 359
Minden, ON. K0M 2K0
admin@mindenhills.ca

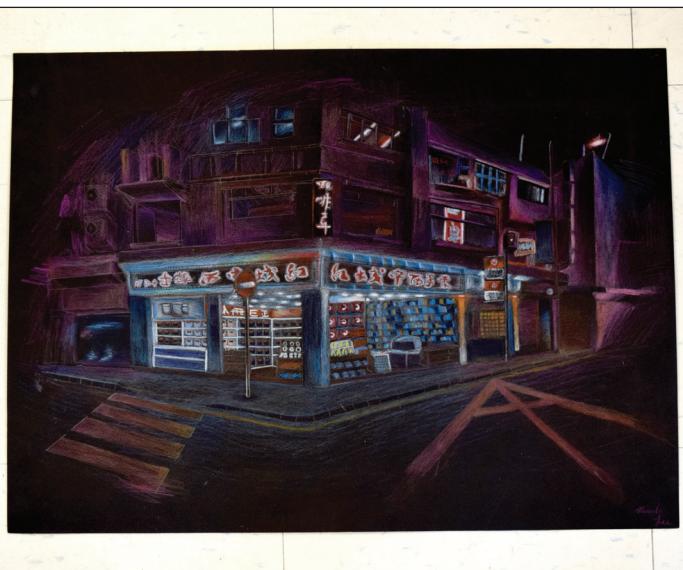


Title: Street Corner in Hong Kong

Artist: Nicole Lee, Grade 9

Media: Coloured pencils on black Stonehenge paper

Nicole was aiming to capture a sense of loneliness and isolation in the work.

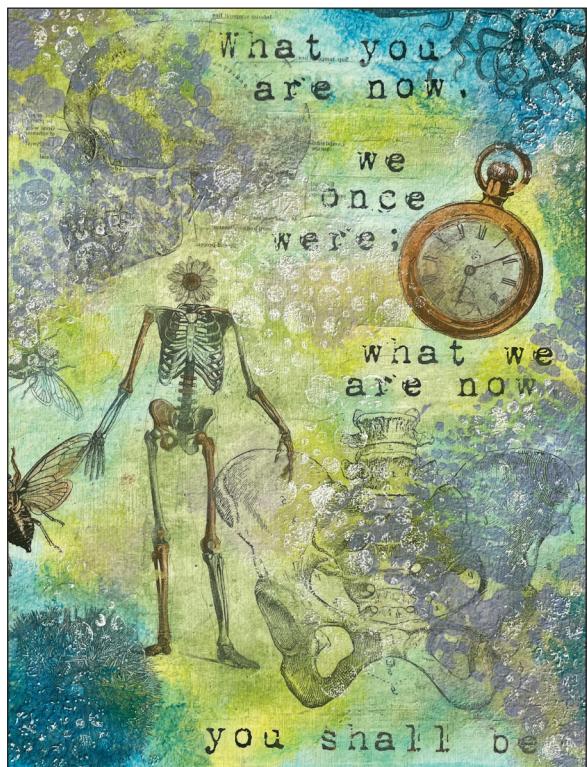


Title: The Inevitability of Time

Artist: Anabelle Craig

Media: gel medium photo transfer and acrylic paint

I wanted to express the fluidity of time and the constant that is morality. However, memento mori's are not supposed to be dark threats of death, but instead a gentle reminder to make the most of your life. To achieve this, I used brighter colours and glitter paint. The flower on the skeleton head is to represent our return to the earth.



This page brought to you by staff and students at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School.

GENERATIONS

Decking the halls with joy at Hyland Crest

For many of us the Christmas season brings with it fond memories and the warmth of tradition.

This month our focus has been to capture those memories in the hearts of our residents through a variety of spirit-filled programming.

Twinkling lights and festive décor have filled our home while recipes of old have been our guide for Christmas baking. On weekends a hot chocolate cart has been circling the halls and on Fridays we've been enjoying a selection of Christmas milkshakes. So far the flavours in highest demand are eggnog and candy cane. Christmas songs of old have filled the air as we gathered for caroling and we were even joined at a distance by the Haliburton Harmony group! What a joy this was for all!

We were pleased to see Gord Kidd again who certainly got our toes a-tapping. We've been in touch with our creative side making a variety of handmade projects such as Christmas stockings, sock snowmen and candy cane reindeers, to name a few. Our Christmas trivia and stories have been a real hit!

One of the many highlights is our Christmas lights tour throughout the community! It's been a "COVID second" since we got out and about, so this trip was very special.

In addition to other special programming, on Christmas

Eve day staff will be found in their PJs reading *A Visit from St. Nicholas* while our residents sip on yummy hot chocolate and apple cider. For the main event – Christmas day, Santa and his elves will be stopping by with presents! We can't wait to see everyone's reactions as they open their gifts and say hello to Santa. Last but not least, there's no better way to say goodbye to 2021 than with a New Year's party! Here we will have quite a selection of goodies, fancy drinks and maybe a little dancing too.

We'd like to say a special thank you to Gord Kidd, Archie Stouffer Elementary School kindergarten classes (A & B), the students and staff of Haliburton Highlands Secondary School, Reverend Max Ward and his church community as well as Fielding Estates. Thank you to each of you for your generosity and kindness. Your contributions have made Christmas here at Hyland Crest very special.

On behalf of Hyland Crest, we wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Lindsay Lester
Life Enrichment Program Manager
Haliburton Highlands Health Services



Residents at Hyland Crest have been in touch with their creative side this month. One craft project was this sock snowman. The entire month at the long-term care facility has been filled with activities, events and programming to celebrate Christmas.



Joan Chambers shows a handmade Christmas stocking she created at Hyland Crest as part of a festive craft session earlier this month. /Photo submitted by Lindsay Lester



At Hyland Crest, the halls are decorated for the holiday and sweet treats, bright lights and live music have made the season bright.

SUDOKU SOLUTION

4	2	8	6	5	1	7	9	3
7	6	9	3	8	4	1	2	5
1	5	3	9	7	2	4	6	8
5	9	1	7	4	3	6	8	2
6	3	4	8	2	5	9	7	1
2	8	7	1	9	6	5	3	4
9	1	6	5	3	8	2	4	7
3	7	2	4	1	9	8	5	6
8	4	5	2	6	7	3	1	9

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AROUND THE COUNTY TOWN



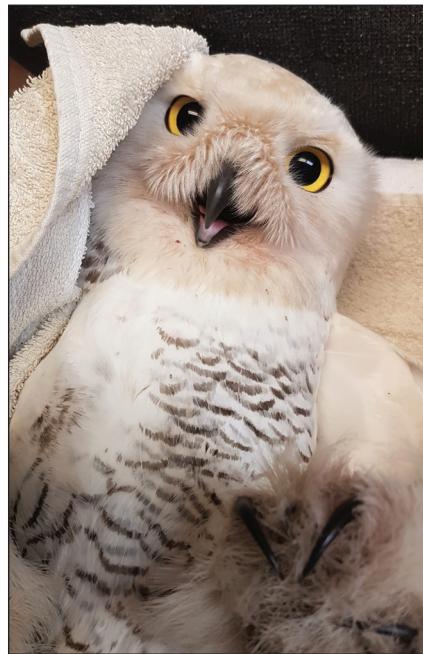
WOODLANDS Wildlife Sanctuary

December's Rescue of the Month

These past few weeks, we saw too many snowy owls in poor condition. Severely emaciated and often covered in lice, with drooping wings, they could barely stand. Most were half the weight they should have been. Their long journey from the Arctic, in search of better hunting grounds, was just too taxing for them and as much as we tried, they were heartbreakers.

Some arrived with fractures and were sent to our colleagues at Shades of Hope Wildlife Refuge for surgery. At least they stood a fighting chance. But of the ones we did save, it was truly a joyous day to see them fly free again.

This is Oscar. He flew all the way from the Arctic, right into a local barn, and consumed a pet duck. The distraught family mourned the passing of their favourite duck but realized that Oscar needed help. He was too tired and too weak to fly away. His expression of indignity as he is being removed by the property is priceless. And so is his comical fierceness as we examined him a few days later. Just look at that moustache and those talons! Oscar was one of the fortunate ones, regaining



his strength and ability to fly, and was released a few weeks later.

To learn more about Woodlands Wildlife Sanctuary, located on Duck Lake Road in Minden, visit woodlandswildlifesanctuary.ca.

Submitted by Monika Melichar

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The puck stops here

Minden resident Matt Hogg played goalie on the opposite side of the rink from his son Kolby at a Highland Storm vs. parents fun game held at the A.J. LaRue arena on Dec. 16. No word on which team won though it was surely fun for all. /Photo submitted by Trish Sweeting-Hogg

*To see your loved ones on this page, send photos to
sue@haliburtonpress.com*



2022 Municipal Election Joint Compliance Audit Committee Members

The Corporations of the Township of Algonquin Highlands, the Township of Minden Hills, the Municipality of Dysart et al and the Municipality of Highlands East, are currently seeking interested applicants from professionals who are required to adhere to codes of standards of their profession, and other individuals with in depth knowledge of the campaign financing rules of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 for appointment to a **Joint Compliance Audit Committee**.

The Joint Compliance Audit Committee has full delegation of the authority in the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, to address applications requesting an audit of a candidate's election campaign finances. This authority includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Review applications and grant or reject audit requests
- Where an audit is granted, appoint an auditor and review the audit report
- Where indicated, decide whether legal proceedings shall be commenced.

The Joint Compliance Audit Committee will consist of members appointed by each Council. Committee members must have the ability to understand and apply the election campaign finance provisions of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 and should be considered impartial with respect to their ability to fulfill their responsibilities. Preference shall be given to candidates that have applicable experience in accounting, law, law enforcement and academics from related fields.

Preferred Qualifications:

- (a) Accounting and audit – accountants or auditors with experience in preparing or auditing the financial statements of municipal candidates;
- (b) Academic – college or university professors with expertise in political science or local government administration;
- (c) Legal; and
- (d) Other individuals with knowledge of the campaign financing rules of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

Members of the public interested in serving on this Committee are asked to submit a resume, and covering letter, marked "Confidential" no later than Noon on January 28, 2022 to:

Robyn Rogers, Clerk
Corporation of the Municipality of Highlands East
2249 Loop Road, P.O. Box 295, Wilberforce, ON K0L 3C0

For further information, please contact Robyn Rogers, Clerk by email at rrogers@highlandseast.ca

We thank all applicants for applying, but only the selected candidates will be contacted. Personal information and supporting material is collected and used in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Minden Times

Classifieds

Call 705-286-1288 classifieds@haliburtonpress.com Deadline 4 pm Each Monday**390 SERVICES****ROY PETRY**

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Haliburton Highlands Health Services has a need for Full-Time, Part-Time (Permanent and/or Temporary) and Casual staff for the noted classifications below.

RN's and RPN's are expected to be available for both Minden and Haliburton Hospital locations. In addition, opportunities are available in our two Long Term Care facilities, Hyland Wood and Hyland Crest. The **Registered Nurse** earns \$33.90 /hr - \$48.53/hr and is responsible for providing comprehensive care to patients, with predictable and unpredictable outcomes who may or may not be clinically stable. The successful candidate will possess a diploma/degree in Nursing and a current Certificate of Competence from the College of Nurses of Ontario. Two years of acute care practice and one year or more of previous emergency department or specialty department experience is preferred. **Temporary accommodation will be provided.**

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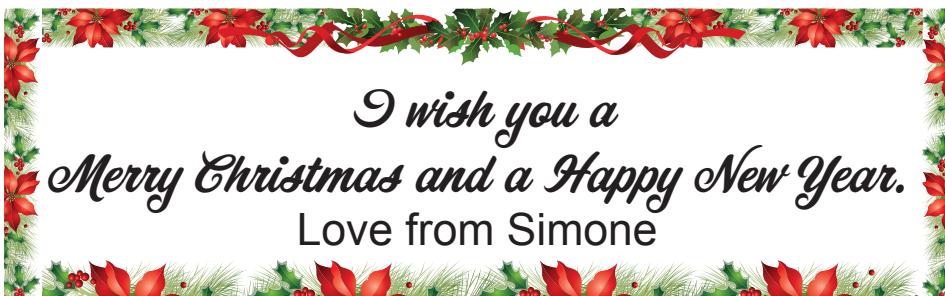
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640 IN MEMORIAM

Ed Litwin
Nov 17, 1960 - Dec 25, 2019

Ed we miss you each and every day. We are still working on your dream project! You would be pleased with the progress and thrilled with all the help we are getting from fantastic family and friends. We truly appreciate the help.

When deciding on the siding the other day you were in my head saying "go with the grey". So many decisions yet to be made and grateful for the examples you started for us. Tim reminds me to be patient, he is learning so many carpentry skills and is a big help. Alexandra is pleased to see it coming together and always ready to help. The guys tell me to get out of their way. We continue to work to finish what you started.

You were taken from us before any of us were

ready to lose you. You set a fantastic example of how to deal with terminal cancer with grace. We were so blessed to have you strong for two and a half years. I will always be thankful that you did not suffer long when things got bad.

Love you always, Lynda



In Memoriam

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650 OBITUARIES



In Loving Memory of **Rudy (Rudolf) Zandstra**

February 3, 1938 – December 12, 2021

Rudy passed away peacefully at Hyland Crest Long-term Care in Minden.

He leaves his beloved wife of 59 years, Louise, his grandson Ethan, daughter-in-law Andrea, devoted friend Roland, and close brother and sister-in-law, Harry and Yvonne, of Holland. Rudy was predeceased by his son Michael in 2019.

Born and raised in Holland, Rudy and Louise emigrated to Canada and moved to Kinmount in 1973. Rudy was well-known in the community for his carpentry skills, building everything from fine furniture to boats to houses. He was also a proud hockey dad for many years, a member and racer at the Pigeon Lake Yacht Club, and an active supporter of the Pioneer Society display at the annual Kinmount Fair.

A celebration of Rudy's life will take place at a later date. Memorial donations to the Kinmount District Health Services Foundation would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home, P.O. Box 427 Minden, Ontario, K0M 2K0.



www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com



In Loving Memory of **Robert "Rob" David Clark**

Passed away suddenly as the result of a head-on collision with a dump truck on Highway 35 North of Lindsay on Tuesday, December 14, 2021. Rob was 64 years old.

Rob was the best friend and loving husband of Mary Lou Clark (nee Austen) for over 13 years. Loving father of Adrienne Clark (Kristian Berry), Adam Clark (deceased 2012), Crystal Austen (Tyler), Jennifer (Jimmy) Abbott, Jeff Packard, and grandpa to Hannah, Adria, Chloe, Kalli, Brady, Valla and Rylee. Beloved son of Audrey and the late Scott Clark. Dear brother of Cindy (Lloyd) Adamson, Kim (Glen) Schnarr, and Ron (Lynn) Clark. Lovingly remembered by his family and friends.

A Memorial Gathering to celebrate Rob's Life will be held at a later date when it is safe to do so. Cremation has taken place.

Memorial Donations to the Kawartha/ Haliburton Victim Services or to the Ontario Brain Injury Society would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com



In Loving Memory of **Ross Alexander Walker**

Passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, December 19, 2021 at the age of 86.

Beloved husband of Dorothy (nee Shepherd). Dear father of Peter and Paul, loving grandpa of Daniel. Dear brother of Doreen (Grenville-deceased) Harrison, and Shirley (deceased). Brother-in-law of George Shepherd (Valerie). Fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews, family and friends.

Ross will be remembered for his community spirit whether volunteering with Minor Hockey, Farmers Association, Fair Board and working with his extended family at Horseshoe Lake. Ross' carpentry skills and farming will be remembered by many.

A celebration of Ross' life will take place at a later date. Cremation has taken place.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highland Health Services Foundation (HHHSF) or Alzheimer's Society would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



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Remember

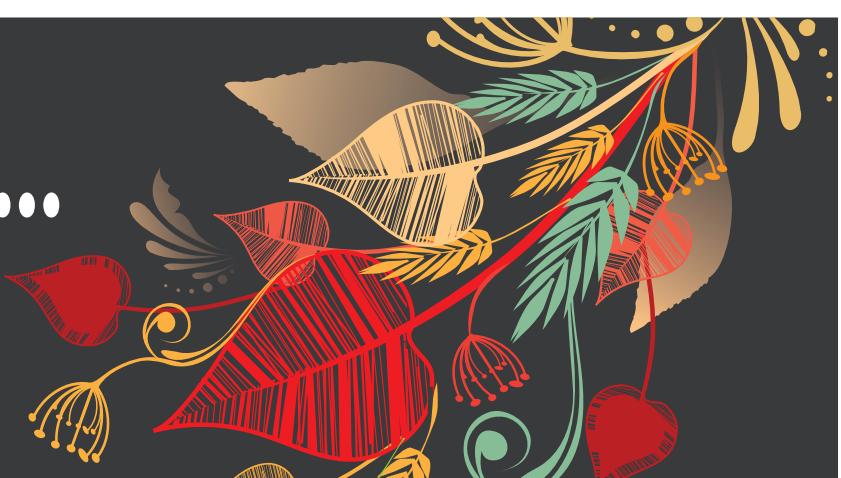
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Santa calls on HHHS

Christmas has arrived early for Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) Board. The pre-Christmas surprise was delivered in the form of an announcement from the Ministry of Health of an infusion of almost \$200,000 into the board's operating budget.

The additional funding is being made under two separate programs. The first, \$99,292, has been allocated to the Health Services Board for transitional purposes. According to the provincial press release, the government has recognized that the restructuring which hospitals have been undergoing has resulted in a number of exceptional costs and expenses. The need for the additional support was identified by a special body established to advise the government on extraordinary needs of hospitals as a result of the restructuring process. Some \$100 million has been allocated for this purpose across the province.

HHHS board Chair Hugh Nichol was pleased with the announcement. "Basically it buys us another year," Nichol stated referring to the impact on this year's deficit, which was predicted to be \$125,000. "This is a relief...it brings us one year closer to completing the capital works and realizing the efficiencies that these new facilities will bring us."

Nichol noted that since taking over the two hospitals, the operating budget has been cut by 11%. He pointed out that similar cuts have been imposed across the province and that most hospitals were 'hurting'. "We haven't been alone in this," he added.

In this regard, the chair said he wasn't sure if the transitional funding represented a one time infusion or if it was a recognition of the under-funding experienced by hospitals across the province.

For the moment however, he is pleased. "We can continue to operate with the current level of services at both sites and that is what is most important to the people of the area," he concluded.

Since its incorporation three and a half years ago, the Health Services Board has carried a deficit in its annual operating budget. The board has been reluctant to eliminate the deficit since it would mean the reduction of core or front line services. Also, be-
(more on page 4)



Stanhope visitor

Santa Claus made an early visit on Saturday much to the delight of Stanhope area children. The jolly man of the season stopped by the Stanhope Community Christmas party sponsored by the township's fire department. One of many to spend a moment on Santa's knee, Kerran Chambers and Santa exchanged meaningful glances and gifts before they bid each other greetings for the holiday season.

Board and teachers reach tentative settlement

The Trillium Lakelands District School Board and the secondary school teachers of the district reached a tentative two year contract agreement. The agreement was announced December 10 following nonstop bargaining sessions.

The two parties held lengthy meetings in Lindsay from December eighth to the tenth, in order to hammer out the tentative settlement. The teachers and the school board have been in dispute since mid-September, with the contentious issue of teaching time being at the centre of the disagreement. The teachers, members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation district 15, have been without a

contract and in a legal strike action since August.

"The news is good," said Cheryl Murdoch, chair of the Trillium Lakelands District School Board. "We are hoping that after the holidays, everything can get back to normal."

Murdoch said that students should feel relieved as tension between teachers and the board lessens, especially after the Haliburton Highlands Secondary School student protest of December 2. "It was the grade 12 and OAC students I felt sorry for. They, of all the groups, were worried about the results of this," said Murdoch.

If the tentative agreement is ratified, it is expected that many of the

extra-curricular activities which have been missing from the school schedule will resume after the Christmas break. The teachers withdrew their involvement in all but their instructional responsibilities as a protest during the contract dispute.

Ratification meetings are expected to be held this week. Details about the agreement have not been released, but additional information is expected next week. Teachers will be meeting in Gravenhurst to review the tentative settlement, with a vote to be held on Thursday. If the teachers ratify the new contract, the school board will hold a special board meeting by the end of the week to add their approval.

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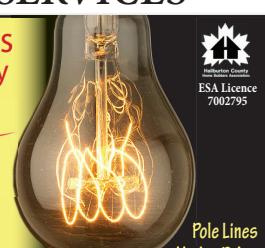


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